

NARROW GAUGE WORLD

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JULY 2022



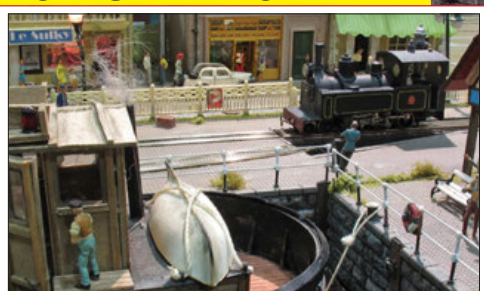
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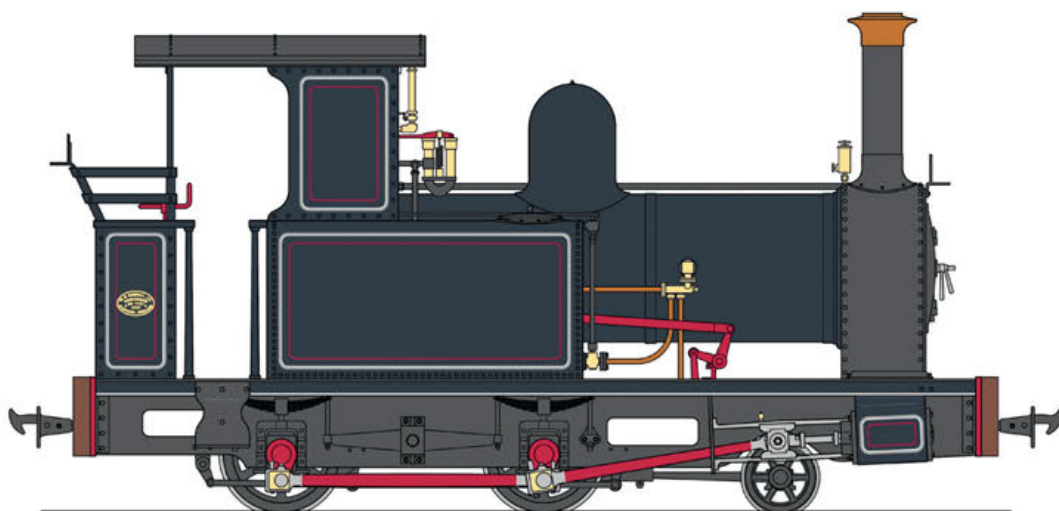


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Cover: Three sisters together, but briefly – the Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway staged a Brazil bonanza on 21st May when its Kerr, Stuart 0-4-2ST 'Premier' returned to service after overhaul. The inset picture shows the Gateshead Garden Festival Railway, a 15-inch gauge line that ran for only five months but carried more passengers than many lines do in years...

Photos: Andrew Charman & Donald Brooks

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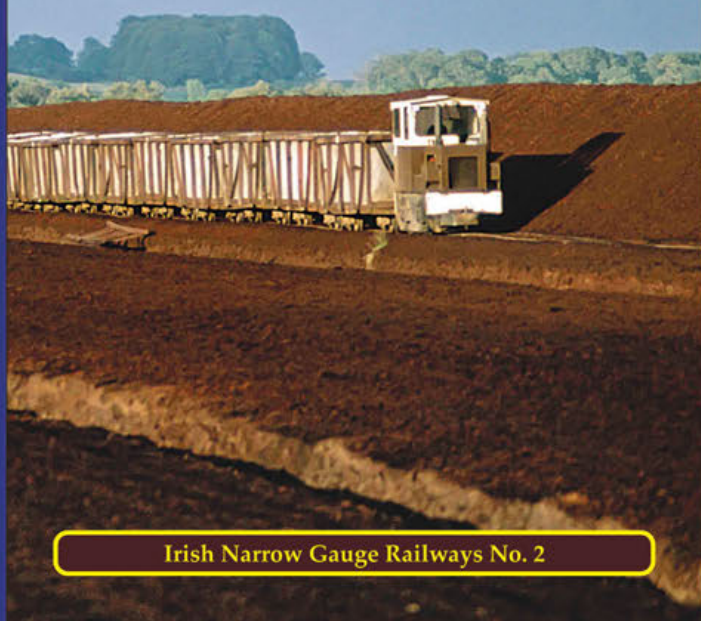
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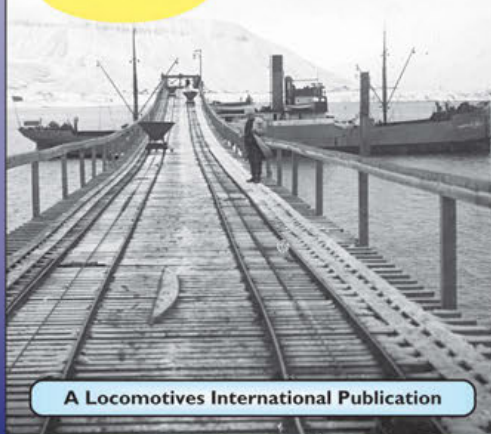


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Oh what an atmosphere...



"I replied I'd actually be more than 230 miles further east..."

Photo: Returned loco, original look, and still an industrial location. *Sjors van Dongen* pictured Brazil 0-4-2ST 'Premier' out in the country during the loco's first weekend back in service after a long-awaited overhaul on 21st-22nd May.

Some days I just love my job editing this magazine (well to be honest even when trying to send final pages in the early hours of the morning I love my job!). A prime example is the lead feature in this month's *NGW* 167, which also features on our cover.

Going into the weekend of 21st-22nd May I had many fellow enthusiasts saying, "See you at the Welshpool & Llanfair's Beyer Bash," and reacting with some surprise when I replied I'd actually be more than 230 miles further east.

Back last year I'd been told by the Fuller family, stalwarts of the Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway, to keep the weekend free for the return of the line's Kerr, Stuart Brazil 0-4-2ST 'Premier' to service after quarter of a century on the sidelines. It had to be this weekend, because fellow Brazil 'Leader' had a boiler ticket that was about to expire, so this would be the only chance for a good while to have three of the highly recognisable class of locos in steam together.

So it was a good news story, but I definitely don't need such a hook to attract me to the Sittingbourne & Kemsley. Okay, this line doesn't

run through dramatic, even attractive scenery. Its locomotives and particularly its rolling stock are not exactly classically elegant examples of the golden era of British engineering, but instead spartan designs that were created solely to do a job of work in industry. And as you will read in my feature on the Three Brazils Gala, this is also a line that has left me with a streaming nose in the past...

Yet, the S&K is also a line that oozes its own atmosphere, one that feels very authentic, what those of us who were born too late imagine proper industrial narrow gauge lines looked like in their declining years. How accurate that image is, well only our elders know, but I'll keep on going back to Sittingbourne – even if it is a very long day trip...

Common sense on coal?

We are pleased to report in this issue that railways can now order proper Welsh steam coal again, following the repair of Fros-y-Fran colliery's washing and grading equipment. The coal is of course now more expensive and being able to get it is potentially only a temporary reprieve from the issues facing our railways

over future fuel, but it is a start.

Is, however, the narrative changing? For a long time the common-sense message, that at a time we still need coal it is far better to dig it out of UK mines than transport it halfway across the world in emissions-pumping ships, has been lost on politicians desperate not to upset the green lobby.

Now, however, one or two of these politicians are being brave enough to suggest in public that allowing further coal extraction might not be such a retrograde move as we have been told.

Summer stay home

Summer is approaching, the railways are into their busiest period, and hoping after the struggles of the last two years it really will be busy.

So, as we see all over news the troubles at airports as travellers see their holiday excitement dissipated by hours sitting in queues hoping their plane won't be cancelled, why not – not bother? Have a UK holiday, and make sure it includes lots of visits to railways. You know it makes sense!

But seriously – enjoy your *NGW*.
Andrew Charman



Welsh coal supplies resume – but possibly only for 2022...

Heritage railways both narrow and standard gauge have welcomed the resumption of the availability of Welsh Steam Coal from Fros-y-Fran colliery, but with a warning that it is only a short-term fix to the coal supplies issue.

As reported in previous editions of *NGW*, the south Wales mine – the UK's last remaining pit supplying steam coal – caused a major panic on 28th January when it suddenly ceased all supplies following a breakdown in its washing and grading plant.

With the mine already due to close in November, it was concluded that repairing the equipment was not economically viable. Railways were forced to seek alternative supplies of coal at much greater cost, while stepping up trials of potential sustainable substitutes to coal.

The situation was further aggravated by the Russian invasion of Ukraine, Russia being a major exporter of steam coal.

Now, however, the Fros-y-Fran equipment has been repaired, the mine working with Hargreaves Ltd which has an exclusive contract to supply the lump coal to the UK market.

Mining will still end in November, however, when the final two areas of the current operation are exhausted and with the loss of 150 jobs, unless Fros-y-Fran is

successful in its application for a two-year extension. Most of the 350,000 tonnes of output that will be produced in this period will go to steel plants in Port Talbot.

The resumption of supplies has also not eased the financial pressures on railways – increasing costs, particularly for the fuel used to power the mine's equipment, is forcing up the price of the coal.

On 25th May the Heritage Railway Association (HRA), together with the National Traction Engine Trust and the Heritage Fuels Alliance met with mine representatives to discuss the situation in what was described as a very useful visit.

The HRA and seven representatives of Welsh railways had already taken their case to the Welsh Parliament on 17th May, meeting Senedd members to discuss the problems over continuing coal supplies and the major role the railways play in Welsh tourism – there are 19 heritage lines in Wales welcoming around 1.2 million visitors and generating £52 million a year for the Welsh economy while across the UK the figure is nearer £600 million.

The Welsh Government will make the decision on extending the Fros-y-Fran licence – hopes have been raised after the Welsh Government climate minister Julie James told the BBC Wales *Politics Show* on 15th May that it was important for some

coal mining to continue.

Meanwhile further trials have taken place with another possible substitute sustainable fuel, both the Tallyllyn and Fairbourne Railways testing biomass briquettes from Phoenix Speciality Oils Ltd, made from the waste produced by rapeseed oil production.

The Fairbourne first tried out the fuel late last year, but the briquettes, which are an odd green colour, produced unacceptable levels of smoke and smell.

It was later discovered the batch used had been in store for some time and Fairbourne general manager Murray Dodds reported that the new batch had yielded more promising results. "This lot is fresh, and we've learnt to store it dry," he said.

The Tallyllyn Railway also held a successful trial with the briquettes using its 0-4-2T 'Tom Rolt'. Engineering manager Chris Smith reported plenty of steam and a lack of clinker or ash.

NGW has been in contact with Phoenix and we hope to bring readers a more detailed insight on this fuel soon.

Above: Fairbourne Railway driver Tom Curtis seemed happy to be trying out a Rapeseed-based coal substitute in early June, even though the actual briquettes look anything but traditional... Photo: Murray Dodds/FR

■ Just as we were about to send the final news pages of this issue to press we received pictures from *Alan Poxon* of Adrian Shooter's Daerjeeling Himalayan Sharp-Stewart 0-4-OST no 19B, normally resident at his private Beeches Light Railway in Oxfordshire, in action at the Statfold Barn Railway's 'Sweet Indian Steam' Gala, which was held over the weekend of 11th-12th June.

We expect to carry more coverage from the Statfold Gala in our next issue.





■ The Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway celebrated the 120th anniversary of its two original locomotives on 20th-22nd May with an unprecedented gathering of other locomotives produced by Beyer, Peacock at its Gorton, Manchester works.

Welshpool Raven Square station played host to four gauges – 2ft 6in gauge 'The Earl' worked passenger services (seen here poking out behind the signal box) while its out-of-ticket sister 'The Countess' was displayed close to the 2ft gauge pioneer Garratt today owned by the Ffestiniog & Welsh Highland Railway and resident at Statfold, 3ft gauge Isle of Man Railway 2-4-OT 'Fenella' (3610/1894) and two standard-gauge locos, former Gorton works shunter no 1827 of 1879 from the Foxfield Railway, and steam tram 'John Bull' (2464/1885) which lives at Crich Tramway Museum. The 0-4-0ST was displayed in steam, running on temporary track. *Photo: Sjors van Dongen*

Taiwan diesel heading for Llanfair?

The Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway hopes to welcome a substantial new member to its motive-power fleet this winter, in the form of a Mitsubishi-built diesel loco from Taiwan.

The plan, which would see the 1972-built loco placed on a three-year loan to the W&LLR, is the latest evidence of an increasingly successful relationship between the Welsh 2ft 6in gauge line and the engine's owners, the Alishan Forest Railway.

DL-34 weighs 25 tons, is rated at 520hp and described as one of the most powerful locomotives built for 2ft 6in gauge service.

It was designed to take loaded trains up gradients as steep as 1 in 16 on the famed Taiwan line, and on curves of similar sharp radius to those on the W&LLR. Its power will make it capable of being able to rescue a failed steam locomotive and its train from any section of the Welsh line.

Putting the loco into service will enable the W&LLR to take both its existing main-line diesels, Drewry 'Chattenden' and Diema TSC175 – the latter built for work

in Taiwan – out of service for long-needed heavy overhauls.

The Alishan is best-known for its iconic Shay steam locomotives and announcing the planned loan W&LLR company secretary Michael Reilly, who as a former diplomat in Taiwan led the project, admitted that romantics amongst the line's members might have preferred to see a Shay on loan instead, but added; "DL-34 is a much more practical proposition."

A 'Sister Railway Agreement' was agreed between the W&LLR and the Alishan in 2017 and has since seen much co-operation between the two, including visiting delegations in both directions, information exchanges and an exhibition about the W&LLR at the Taiwanese line.

W&LLR chairman Steve Clews said that the line was most grateful to the Alishan and the Taiwan Forestry Bureau, which runs the AFR. "DL-34 will be a welcome and valuable addition to our roster," he said. "We hope once the pandemic has receded sufficiently

Taiwanese visitors will be able to come and see the loco for themselves."

While the W&L and AFR have agreed details of the loan, however, **NGW** understands that there are still major obstacles to overcome before the loco appears in Wales, principally the cost and current lack of availability of shipping DL-34 halfway round the globe.

The Alishan initiative led to a second Sister Railway Agreement between the W&LLR and the Taiwan Sugar Corporation, former home of Diema loco TSC 175 and which now runs five heritage lines. This culminated in the Welsh line's Barclay 0-4-0 'Doug' visiting Taiwan as a guest at TSC's annual Sugar Festival in December 2018.

Photo: Heading for Wales? DL-34 pictured on test in Taiwan following a recent overhaul.

Photo: AFR

Peter Pan to pump museum

Well-travelled Ker Stuart Wren 0-4-0ST 'Peter Pan' will be adding yet another line to its resume on 29th August when it appears at the annual Gala of the Westonzoyle Pumping Museum Light Railway.

The loco, owned by Graham Morris and celebrating its centenary in 2022, will be hauling passenger trains on the 2ft gauge line, the first time a steam locomotive has run at the museum.

The line traverses the Grade II-listed pumping station in Bridgewater, Somerset, which houses one of the largest collections of stationary steam engines and pumps in the UK.

More details of the Gala will be on the museum website at www.wzlet.org



Russell to return for WHR Centenary celebration



The only surviving original Welsh Highland Railway locomotive, Hunslet 2-6-2T 'Russell' is to return to its former home at the end of the month as a year of celebrations marking the centenary of the WHR begin.

The loco, now owned by the Welsh Highland Heritage Railway, has already been back to the WHR – the revived line runs alongside the WHHR's Gelert Farm, Porthmadog base on what was once the WHR's Beddgelert transhipment siding.

In 2019 the loco ran on the section of WHR from the WHHR's Pen y Mount Halt to Beddgelert. On 30th/31st July this year it will work a series of heritage trains between Dinas and Rhyd Ddu – a first in preservation and 100 years after the first

original Welsh Highland Railway trains ran over this section.

Russell was built in 1906 for the Porthmadog, Beddgelert & South Snowdon Railway. This line was never completed and the loco was taken into the stock of the North Wales Narrow Gauge Railway, running between Dinas, near Caernarfon, and South Snowdon – today's Rhyd Ddu.

In 1922 a new line was built from Porthmadog to connect with the NWNGR at South Snowdon, the whole line then becoming the Welsh Highland Railway. The WHR closed in 1937 but was rebuilt by the Ffestiniog Railway between 1997 and 2011.

The trains at the end of July will be the first in a series of events telling the story of

the WHR, jointly organised by the Ffestiniog Railway Company, Welsh Highland Heritage Railway, the Welsh Highland Railway Society and the Welsh Highland Railway Heritage Group.

The year will culminate with an event on 23rd-25th June next year, celebrating the opening through to Porthmadog. This will be based at the southern end of the railway and is set to include all three railways and some of the original locomotives that still operate on the line.

Above: Russell and an authentic Welsh Highland Railway heritage train cross the river at Pont Croesor during the locomotive's last run on its former home line in 2019.

Photo: Chris Parry/FFWHR



ENGINE, SNOWDON RAILWAY TRAIN, AT LLANBERIS STATION



Schoolchildren join party for Snowdon's Padarn

The Snowdon Mountain Railway has marked the 100th birthday of its locomotive no 6 'Padarn' with a trip for local schoolchildren.

The loco was one of the second batch of engines built by the Swiss Locomotive & Manufacturing Co for the 800mm gauge rack line, costing £3,000 (equivalent to around £120,000 today) and entering service in 1922.

Originally the loco was named 'Sir Harmood' after the then chairman of the SMR, Sir John Sutherland Harmood-Banner. Its name was changed in 1928 to that of the lake adjacent to the railway's home town of Llanberis, Llyn Padarn.

To celebrate the centenary schoolchildren from Ysgol Dolbadarn in Llanberis were taken for a trip up the mountain to the 2022 terminus of Clogwyn, powered by Padarn.

SMR commercial manager Vince Hughes said that for many of the children it was their first ride on the line and they thoroughly enjoyed the journey up the mountain to Clogwyn.

"The fact that this Swiss locomotive is still operational after 100 years of service can only make you appreciate how well the Victorians constructed them – out of the seven original locomotives the railway purchased three are still in operation today," he added.

Left: SMR no 6 'Padarn' pictured shortly after delivery to the Snowdon Mountain Railway in 1922, and on its 100th birthday celebrated with local schoolchildren.

Photos: SMR



Talyllyn celebrates its gold-hearted members

The Talyllyn Railway ran its annual Founder's Day train on 14th May with travellers including members of the pioneer preserved line's 'Heart of Gold' group.

The group takes its name from the railway's nickname, which itself comes from the name of a film released in 1965 and mostly shot in 1953 in the early days of the Preservation Society.

Heart of Gold Group members make a regular monthly donation to the Society and receive exclusive benefits including the invitation to travel on the Founders' Day train and a special edition of the Talyllyn Railway enamel badge.

TRPS president David Mitchell sent the train off by cutting a ceremonial tape, using the same ribbon first employed 71 years ago when the Talyllyn reopened as a heritage line.

The double-headed train was hauled by the two former Corris Railway 0-4-2STs no 3 'Sir Haydn' and no 4 'Edward Thomas'. The trip included a pause for no 4's refreshment at the recently restored original watering point of Ty Dwr where the loco took water.

TRPS chairman, Jonathan Mann, said that it was wonderful to be able to celebrate Founders' Day in a more normal manner this year. "A good number of members attended, including one gentleman who had with him a photograph taken when he was a young boy, standing in the Guard's van on the Railway in

1947 – this scene was quickly recreated with him standing once again in the van for a photograph, much to his delight."

Later this year the TR plans to run a number of special trains available to anyone interested in learning more about the slate heritage of the line.

On the 'Pioneer's Train', an experienced guide will travel throughout the journey, pointing out interesting features and answering questions. Details of these events will be on the website at www.talyllyn.co.uk

Above: The recreated watering point of Ty Dwr proved a centre of interest.

Below: TRPS president David Mitchell recreated the opening ceremony with the same ribbon that was used in 1951.

Photos: TR



■ Several railways took the opportunity to adorn their locos in suitably celebratory front ends over the period of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee holiday – **Matthew Pye** caught the Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway's Krauss Pacific 'Whillan Beck' at Dalegarth on Friday 3rd June.



BRIEF LINES

More land for L&B

Lynton & Barnstaple Railway sister organisation Exmoor Associates has announced the purchase of another section of trackbed for the line's revival. The 489-metre long section, known as Budd's Wood, is adjacent to the Chelfham viaduct.

Ruston ready for Exmoor

Restoration of Ruston 22/28HP diesel 179880 of 1936, which spent many years on display at the Lynton & Barnstaple Railway's former Lynton station (NGW160) has now been completed and the loco has been gifted to Exmoor Associates ready to play a role in future extension of the L&BR.

New carriage at Old kiln

The Old Kiln Railway has taken delivery of a new bogie carriage. Built for the Ramsgate Tunnel Railway, which operated between 1936 and 1965 and was to the same 2ft gauge as the Old Kiln, the carriage has had a new body built by the Moors Valley Railway. It will need some work before entering service on the Surrey line.

Fowler boiler progress

Latest progress in the restoration of 1924-built Fowler 0-4-2 no 16341 at 'Workshop X' in Killamarsh has seen corroded sections of the boiler cut out and new plated sections made ready for welding in place. Owned by the proprietor of The Steam Workshop model engineers, the loco was repatriated from Australia by Jeremy Martin of the Richmond Light Railway and sold to the current owner in 2019.

Boiler lifts aplenty

Further activity at Workshop X in recent weeks has seen the boilers of both 3ft gauge Hudswell-Clarke 0-4-0ST 'Handyman' which is being cosmetically restored for the Statfold Narrow Gauge Trust, and Orenstein & Koppell Luttermöller 0-10-0T 10956 lifted from their frames. The O&K's boiler proved a particular challenge, the Killamarsh team discovering it was both riveted and welded to the frames...

For Statfold read Amerton

Our editor had complete brain fade in our last issue, not once but twice describing the Bala 50 event's visiting Hunslet Wren 0-4-0ST 'Jennie' as a Statfold resident, when of course he meant the Amerton Railway. He profusely apologises...



Manx lines gear up for Summer Festival

The railways and tramways of the Isle of Man will be signalling a proper return to normality at the end of July by staging a five-day Summer Transport Festival.

All five of the currently operating island lines will be taking part in the event between 27th-31st July though the main action will be on the Steam Railway and the Manx Electric Railway.

Highlights on the former include the return to service of newly overhauled Beyer, Peacock 2-4-0T 'Maitland', a night event at the Port Erin Railway Museum, tours of the running shed and signal box at Douglas station, and pie & mash and Marrakesh dining trains. The popular closed lines bus tour will also feature during the week.

The Manx Electric Railway will operate several parallel runs on its double track, a number of unusual tram and trailer combinations, tours of the car sheds at

Derby Castle and Laxey, and even the chance to try one's hand as a motorman.

There will also be a rare opportunity to see inside the Snaefell Mountain Railway depot at Laxey, while both the Groudle Glen Railway and the Great Laxey Mines Railway will also be getting involved in the festivities, the Groudle staging a Victorian Saturday and Gala on Sunday.

Full details of the Festival, with all the events listed, are in a brochure which can be downloaded in PDF form from the Events & Experiences section of the www.rail.im website.

Above: new-build Bagnall 'Brown Bear' waits to pull a special train on the Groudle Glen Railway during the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations on 5th June. And the loco will be playing its part in a summer celebration on the island at the end of this month. Photo: GGR



Annie gets an overhaul and a new owner

The Bagnall-style 0-4-2T 'Annie' has been transported from its home at the Groudle Glen Railway to John Fowler Engineering in Cumbria to undergo a major overhaul.

The 2ft gauge loco was built in 1998 by Groudle Glen stalwart Richard Booth, to the design of a locomotive that Bagnall supplied to the Gentle Annis Tramway in New Zealand in 1922.

Annie has been out of service for some time awaiting major work that has now been made possible by a significant donation made by the Williamson family.

The funding has enabled a new boiler to the original design to be ordered from Bennett Boilers in Somerset. A new cast pony truck has been ordered while the overhaul will also include work to the locomotive's motion and new side tanks.

Meanwhile Richard Booth has told *NGW* that he has recently given Annie to the Sea Lion Locomotive Trust. A separate concern to the Groudle Glen operating company and a registered charity, the Trust also owns original GGR Bagnall 2-4-0T 'Sea Lion' and Baguley diesel 'Maltby'.

Above: 'Annie' touches down at John Fowler Engineering ahead of its overhaul.

Photo: Jack Dibnah/JFE

Below: The patterns used to cast the trailing truck for 'Brown Bear', pictured here, will be re-used on a new truck for Annie.

Photo: Richard Booth

■ Among lines back in operation this season is that at the Threlkeld Quarry Museum in Cumbria. James Kindred caught Bagnall 0-4-0ST 'Sir Tom' in less than glorious conditions on 31st May.



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Sisters reunited at Evesham

The annual Steam Gala of the Evesham Vale Light Railway will take on additional significance this year as the Worcestershire 15-inch gauge line celebrates its 20th anniversary.

The event on 9th-10th July will welcome two visiting locos, 0-6-2T 'Powys' from the Rhiw Valley Railway in mid Wales and 'Bonnie Dundee' from the Cleethorpes Coast Light Railway.

Powys, a David Curwen design built by Severn Lamb in 1972 has never previously left its Welsh home and at the Gala will be reunited with sister Severn Lamb loco 'Dougal', resident at Evesham.

Bonnie Dundee started life as a 2ft gauge 0-4-0WT built by Kerr Stuart in 1900 for Dundee gasworks. When the gasworks closed in 1959 it was sold into

private ownership and then in 1976 went to the Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway for restoration, during which the loco was regauged and side tanks added.

A further rebuild in 1996 saw the loco adopt its current form as an 0-4-2 with tender. It is now on long-term loan to the Cleethorpes line and will be having its first outing since the completion of a recent overhaul by John Fowler Engineering at Old Hall Farm in Bouth.

The Gala will feature an intensive service on both days with a variety of different locomotives hauling trains.

Rover tickets will be available on both days and as part of the anniversary 20 complimentary tickets will be placed in the Adult ticket rack on each day.

Photo of 'Powys' above by Andrew Charman

Jubilee first for the Queen Mary

An almost 100-year old carriage carried its first-ever fare-paying passengers over the Jubilee weekend of 4th-5th June.

As reported in *NGW* 164, the Lincolnshire Coast Light Railway has been restoring the 'Queen Mary' carriage, to increase train capacity and help with a short platform at one of its stations.

The 2ft gauge vehicle was built originally for the Nocton Estates Railway in either 1926 to 1927 to transport guests

at shooting parties held on the estate.

The vehicle got its name from estate workers, reputedly as a result of the haughty manner of some of the guests who were transported in it!

So many visitors wanted to travel on the LCLR over the holiday weekend that on the second day it had to operate a three-carriage train, the first time this has been necessary since the line moved to Skegness Water Park in 2009.



■ Green for go: The Rhyl Miniature Railway has repainted its 1921-built Barnes Atlantic 'Railway Queen' into the colours the 15-inch gauge locomotive wore when it ran at the Belle Vue Railway in Manchester from 1928 until the 1980s.

Photo: Justin Bell/RMR



Back on track at Fintown

The Fintown Railway re-opened for the first time since the Covid Pandemic on 15th June (*writes Hugh Dougherty*).

Former County Donegal Railways railcar no 18 is now running on the 3ft gauge line five days a week (not Mondays or Saturdays) until mid-September.

The Gardner-engined railcar 18, built by Walkers of Wigan and the Great Northern Railway of Ireland for the CDR in 1940, has been on loan to the railway by its owners, the North West of Ireland Railway Society, since Easter 2003, and will mark 20 years at Fintown in 2023.

The line's Seamus McElwee said that Fintown staff were delighted to be operating again this year and hoping for a good season having been badly hit by the Covid lockdowns.

"Our local credit union has been very kind and that's allowed us to run again this summer, but we need as many people as possible to visit us and to ride in a genuine Donegal railcar over our three-mile section of the Glenties line, amid superb scenery, to bring in much-needed revenue to ensure our future survival," Seamus added.

Full details of train times are at www.facebook.com/fintownrailway

Photo: Back on track for 2022: Railcar 18 arrives at Fintown *Photo: Hugh Dougherty*

■ Just as we closed for press news came through that the Cavan and Leitrim Railway had gained permission to operate passenger services on its line at Dromod, following proactive engagement with the Commission for Rail Regulation. C&L spokesman Darragh Connolly described the decision as "a momentous occasion in the history of the preserved railway."

Members of the McInerney, Pentony and Cleary families were the first groups to board the train service at Dromod on 4th June and the railway is now open at weekends. We will have more on this progress in our next issue.



■ The Fairbourne Railway staged a successful annual Gala over the weekend of 28th-30th May. Diligent work by the railway's engineering department in finishing an axle and crank replacement on Darjeeling 0-4-0ST 'Sherpa' ensured it was able to share duties on the 12.25-inch gauge line with fellow residents 2-6-4T 'Russell' and 2-6-2T 'Yeo'.

Exmoor Steam Railway-built 'Christopher' (right), visiting from the Littlehampton Miniature Railway, also ran on the main line while two more Exmoor-built locos – 'Monty' (below) from the Evesham Vale Light Railway and 'Anne' (below right) from the Perrygrove Railway, topped and tailed on the 15-inch gauge demonstration line.

Photos: Andrew Charman



Right: When Ratty met Romney – not for the first time a Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway Gala featured visitors from fellow 15-inch gauge line the Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway. At New Romney during the 95th Anniversary Gala on 15th May the Cumbrian line's diesel 'Shelagh of Eskdale', which has been helping out in Kent for some time, and Heywood 0-8-2 'River Irt' lined up with residents Krupp 4-6-2 'Black Prince', Davey Paxman 4-8-2 'Samson' and Krauss 0-4-0 'The Bug'.



Right: Typical of such events, the RH&DR ran a 'Cumbrian Mountain Express' featuring none of its Cumbrian visitors! Samson, Black Prince and between them the reversed Yorkshire Engine Co 4-6-2 'Winston Churchill' did the duties.

Photos: Steve Town – see also Gallery pages



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Froissy 50th – better late than never...



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The Chemin de fer Froissy-Dompierre, run by APPEVA (Association Picarde pour la Préservation et l'Entretien des Véhicules Anciens) finally got to stage its delayed 50th anniversary gala over the weekend of the 26th-29th May.

The group had actually clocked up half a century since the first heritage trains ran on the line in 1921, but the Covid pandemic prevented the Gala being held last year.

Located in the Somme Department of France, between Paris and Lille, the 600mm gauge line is the last survivor of the many miles of trench railways that were built in the First World War to service both Allied and German front lines.

FRANCE

The railway dates from 1915 when the French Army built a line along the Somme canal – Froissy provided an interchange with the metre-gauge Réseau Albert line. From 1916 to 1918 the line was on the Allied front line with 1500 tonnes of arms and provisions passing over it each day.

Following the war the line remained and was initially used for reconstruction and later for transporting sugar beet, being extended more than once with a zig-zag added to gain height to the Santerre Plateau. It continued working until 1972, by which time the two extended sections to

Chaulnes and Péronne had been removed.

APPEVA had been formed in 1970 with the aim of preserving a narrow-gauge line and soon settled on Froissy. The first APPEVA train ran in June 1971 over a kilometre of route from Froissy to Cappy.

The line to the top of the zig-zag was reopened by 1974 and two years later to Dompierre, reaching the 4.3 miles that forms today's line. A new museum was opened in Froissy in 1996.

It is a highly interesting route – as well as the zig-zag and the roadside section to Dompierre, trains also negotiate a 200-metre long tunnel on a curve.

The Gala event saw several of the Froissy line's resident steam fleet in action and two visitors from the Pithiviers museum railway run by AMTP (Association du Musée des Transports de Pithiviers). These were a 1938-built La Meuse 2-6-0 that formerly worked at the Maizy sugar refinery, and a Henschel-built Brigadelok (1551/1917).

Attractions for visitors included passenger trains and a demonstration goods train with former sugar-beet wagons, harking back to the line's post-war history.

Top: Volunteers from Pithiviers pose with their La Meuse loco at Dompierre during the evening 'fun train'.

Above left: On the Friday, locos in service over the weekend gathered around the turntable at Froissy with their crews. From left to right are a Brigadelok (Henschel 1551/1917) from Pithiviers, Froissy residents Decauville 0-6-0 (1652/1916) and Coferna 0-6-0 diesel (1941) La Meuse 2-6-0 (1938) from Pithiviers, Vulcan 0-8-0 (3852/1925) and Borsig Brigadelok 'Genevieve' (10334/1918), both from Froissy.

Left: The visiting La Meuse and Brigadelok from Pithiviers at Cappy.

Photos: Charles Insley – Charles's 009 model railway with a French theme was displayed at the Gala and is featured from page 40.



■ The first full year of revived logging trains on the Zillertalbahn in AUSTRIA has proven a major success according to the line. We reported in *NGW* 157 how the trains, which had not run for eight years, had been reinstated in the hope of cutting road traffic. Timber specialist the Binderholz Group used the line to transport cut trees from Jenbach to its factory in Fügen for processing – the first year has seen 4,649 wagons of timber travelling in a total of 582 trains, representing 276,300 gross tonnes, or 19,000 truck journeys, removed from the area's road network. Photo: Zillertalbahn



Boost in tourism hastens upgrades to Matheran line

Longer trains and online booking services are being proposed for the Matheran Hill Railway near Mumbai, INDIA to boost post-Covid tourism.

Services over the full 21km long 2ft gauge line, which dates to 1901, have been suspended since 2020 following cyclone damage, with only the section from Matheran to the first intermediate station of Amman Point operating.

Reconstruction work is expected to be completed by the end of 2022 with the upgraded line shortening journey times by 30 minutes, while Indian Railways is also looking at a number of further improvement measures.

For the first time travellers will be able to book tickets for travel on the line through the national operator's central online booking system. This is being made possible by the laying of fibre-optic connecting the stations.

There are to be more train services to the Hill station at Matheran, while research is underway to determine whether trains can be lengthened from six to eight carriages. This is despite the Matheran line being a typical Indian hill railway with several sharp ascents, zig-zag reverses, cuttings and tunnels.

According to the *Mid-day* Matheran newspaper, representatives of Matheran Municipal Council met the divisional railway manager to request that the weekend service of 10 trains a day be extended throughout the week. "It is the only major means of transport and attraction and will help boost the economy," Mumbai council president Prerana Sawant said.

Railway officials reportedly assured the council that trials would take place to determine whether increasing the train length to eight carriages was practical.

Tram museum counts cost of Covid



The Museum of the Rotterdamsche

NETHERLANDS

Tramweg Maatschappij (RTM) at Ouddorp has become yet another organisation to feel the effects of the recent Covid pandemic, impacting its finances.

Paul Conlan, who visited the 1067mm gauge (3ft 6in) museum on 4th June, reports that work to build a Backer & Rueb replica tramway loco No 37 is progressing very slowly. "So far the cylinder block has been placed in the frames and the wheels, axles and boiler are ready but little else," Paul told *NGW*.

The loss of income from Covid closures has forced the RTM to prioritise funding for other projects including Orenstein & Koppel 0-6-0 tram locomotive no 56, built in 1920 and carriage no 397. The locomotive only needs

primer coating and painting and it is hoped it will enter service before the end of the 2022 operating season.

Also adding to the costs is an extension to the museum currently under construction and which when completed will allow more space for exhibits as well as improved toilet facilities for visitors. It is hoped that the work on the extension will be completed in 2023.

The RTM also hopes at some point to extend its running line from West Report to the village of Scharendijke in Schowen Duiveland but Paul adds that this is a project for the future.

Above: RTM M1805 'Meeuw' (Seagull) approaches West Report on the running line, with the Grevelingenmeer in the background. Port Zélande can be seen in the distance at the right.

Below: Carriage No 397 undergoing restoration in the RTM's workshops at De Punt.
Photos: Paul Conlan



Loco traumas but MTVS on track

Recent times at the Museum of French Steam Tramways and Secondary Railways (MTVS) at Crèvecœur-le-Grand, north of Paris, have seen ups and downs, according to the museum's *Olivier Janneau*.

The most significant 'down' involved the restoration of the museum's 1897-built Corpet-Louvet 0-6-0T no 691, which had been making good progress.

Much work had been done preparing the loco for its official hydraulic test, including a boiler retube, descaling and ultrasonic tests. But days before the arrival of the inspector a hydraulic test by the museum resulted in cracks appearing in the loco's firebox.

"This is the end of the story for the present," Olivier said. "The firebox will have to be repaired or replaced and there is no funding available for the moment."

Much better news has come from the Communauté de Communes de la Picardie Verte (CCPV), the local authority that owns the next section of the project's running line.

"The president came to our general meeting at the beginning of April, to announce that from 2022 the CCPV will give us a grant equivalent to three lorries of new sleepers enabling us to extend the track by 1.2 km per year."

Olivier added that the MTVS is now awaiting the signing of the agreement so that authorisation can be sought to permit rehabilitation of the line, a process that should take around four months.

"Then, from 2023, we will start to remove

FRANCE

the current track and replace it with metre-gauge track. Our next goal is Oudeuil station, which is currently walled in and 4.1km away – the station, owned by the CCPV, is to be rehabilitated and will be the temporary terminus of the train with a refreshment bar and local products, reception for tourists and information on local paths and bike rides."

Olivier added that the station will for the first time be equipped with a turntable, a water tower and a wagon weighbridge.

The MTVS has also recently received more items from Switzerland, including a track tamping machine it has been awaiting a year and which was sourced from the Yverdon/Sainte Croix railway.

In May a chassis formerly under a passenger carriage was delivered from the Swiss line between Nyon and Saint-Cergue, the culmination of a process started back in 2007.

"This was recovered mainly for its bogies, which will be fitted to a chassis that will be built to suit the Haute Saône carriage currently being restored.

"The whole will go under the body of the Jura car number 56 which was saved in 2007 – we will then have three carriages from the same manufacturer in three different versions, one in sheet metal (Vienne BB7), one in varnished wood (Haute Saône B5v), and the last, Jura no 56, in green wood.

Photo: MTVS trains are set to run a lot further in future with a further 4.12km route to Oudeuil now in the group's sights. Photo: Olivier Janneau/MTVS

Wagon workshop build progresses

Members of the Upsala-Lenna Järnväg (ULJ) (Upsala-Lenna Railway) in SWEDEN are making solid progress with the erection of a carriage and wagon workshop at their base in Faringe – the walls of the wooden building were erected before the end of May with the roof set to follow rapidly.

The 891mm line – a gauge unique to Sweden – runs for some 21 miles and is a surviving section of the once much more extensive Roslagen network.

Can't find a diesel? Shrink a standard...

The Wiscasset, Waterville and Farmington Railway Museum in Maine, USA, has taken delivery of a standard-gauge diesel locomotive, which it intends to rebuild and modify to the museum's 2ft gauge.

The diesel, a General Electric 45-ton unit built in 1941, was delivered to the museum's base at Sheepscot in mid-May and unloaded onto a specially constructed standard gauge track panel, having been acquired for "scrap price."

The museum has been searching for three years for a suitable locomotive to supplement its existing diesel; "We needed something to plough snow, pull work trains, handle trains on the Mountain Extension, and (perish the thought) rescue a stalled steam train."

The plan is to overhaul the two power bogies and rebuild them to 2ft gauge, create a new powertrain based on one of the loco's two diesel engines and traction motors, narrow the loco's width to fit the line and reduce its weight by around 10 tons, and fit snowploughs at either end.

There is also the possibility of at some point installing an alternative battery propulsion system.



■ Last month we featured an incredible one-man new-build project in South Australia, engineer Glenn Smythe constructing an example of the lost Z-class of 3ft 6in gauge 4-4-0 tender locos. Well Glenn has already been in touch with a photo update, in that the loco is now 'standing on its own two feet' after the second of the driving wheels was lifted into place. Of course we will keep readers informed of further progress on this inspiring project.

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Brazil in the Premier League

Andrew Charman heads to Kent for the long-awaited and yet brief reunion between three sister locomotives.

It was as I accepted the invitation to climb onto the footplate of the Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway's Hudson Hunslet diesel workhorse 'Victor' (4182/1953) that I realised that never had I previously ridden a heritage railway train so early in the morning – even on my home Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway.

It was Saturday 21st May at Sittingbourne Viaduct terminus in the town on the north Kent coast, and I was meeting the 7.30am train to Kemsley Down as one of the early visitors for a very special event. While many railways celebrate the return of a locomotive to steam after a long restoration, Kerr, Stuart 0-4-2ST 'Premier' was not only entering service for the first time in more than

quarter of a century, it was sharing duties with its two almost identical sisters 'Leader' and 'Melior'.

And this was indeed an event not likely to be repeated for many years. For as Premier made its return, Leader was working its last weekend before its boiler ticket expired – with the loco being third in the S&KLR's current overhaul queue it won't be back in action any time soon.

Premier has been restored to an appearance it would have presented when built in 1905 under works number 886. Appropriate – as one of the earliest examples of the Kerr, Stuart Brazil class, the locomotive became fleet number one of the brand-new 2ft 6in gauge railway built by Edward Lloyd to serve his equally

Above: The sister Brazils raise steam on the Saturday morning of the anniversary event. Left to right are 'Melior', 'Leader' and star of the show 'Premier'.

Below: The rebuild of Premier resulted in an appearance recalling its early days working on the paper mill line.

Photos by Andrew Charman except where stated, taken on Saturday 21st May.

new paper mill at Sittingbourne. Sister Kerr, Stuart Leader (926) arrived shortly after.

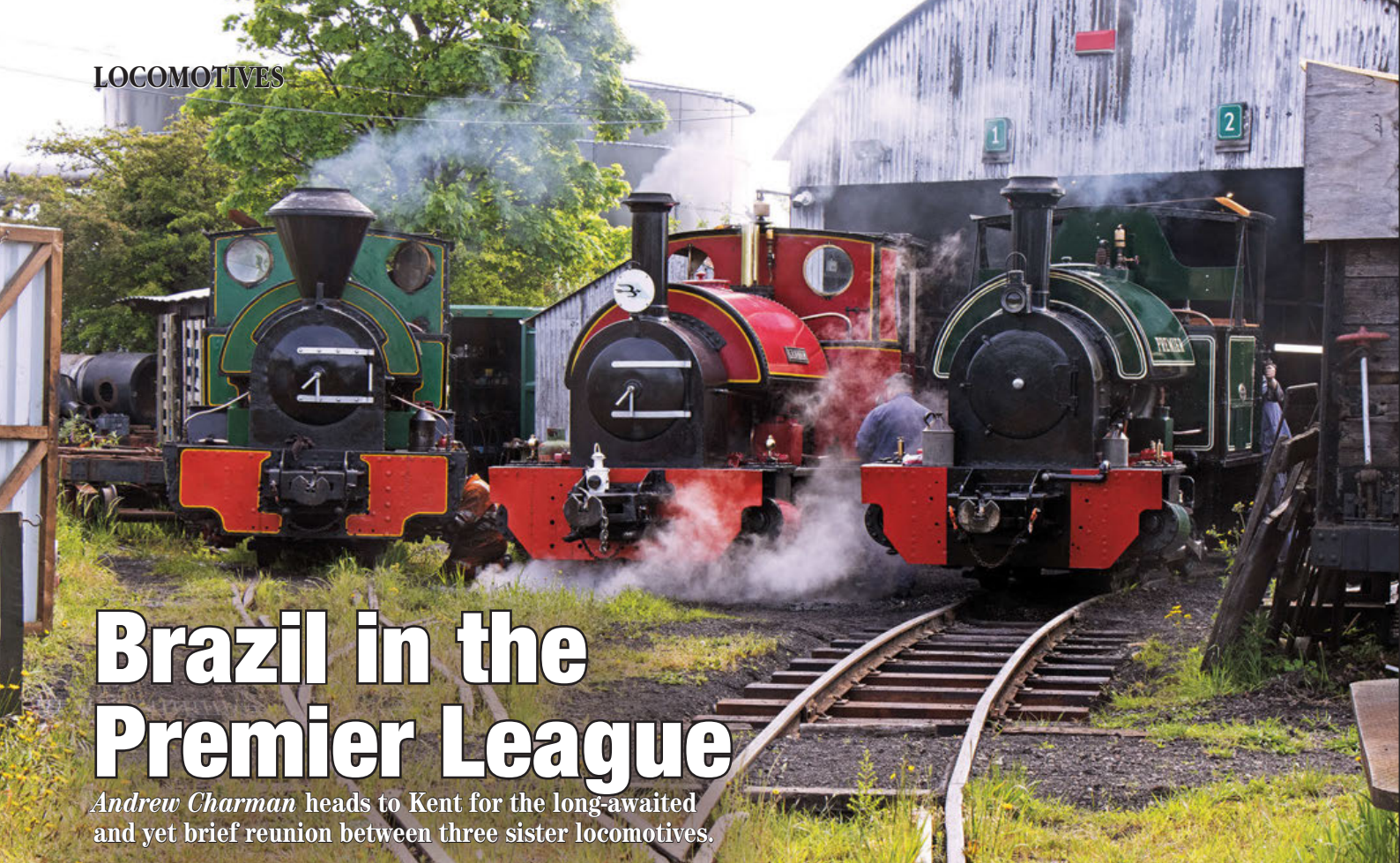
Doubling the fleet

The railway grew over the years as the paper complex expanded and in 1948 became part of the Bowaters Group. By the time a switch to road transport resulted in closure of the railway in the Autumn of 1969 there were two more Brazils in the fleet. 'Excelsior' (1049) had arrived in 1908 and 'Melior' (4219) in 1924 – the latter an improved version of the design with Hackworth motion.

By the time of closure efforts were already underway to preserve the southern section of the railway and the Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway opened in 1970, initially operated by members of the Locomotive Club of Great Britain.

All four Brazils were preserved – Premier, Leader and Melior remained at Sittingbourne, while Excelsior was among four Bowaters locomotives sold to the Pleasurairail operation which was planning to build new lines at stately homes and other attractions. The four went to a line that was under construction at Whipsnade zoo in Bedfordshire, and three of them, including Excelsior, remain there today.

Back at Sittingbourne, Premier had remained in working order right up to the end of Bowaters operation and was heavily used in the early years of preservation, alongside the



Bagnall 0-6-2Ts 'Superb' and 'Triumph'. Leader, withdrawn in 1969, was acquired by a consortium of S&KLR members who restored the loco, while Melior, working but in poor condition at the end of the Bowaters era, needed heavy repairs and did not enter service on the preserved line until the mid 1980s.

Premier last steamed on the S&KLR in 1996. A decision was made in 2005 to try and seek a Heritage Lottery grant for an overhaul and the railway wrote to the local Swale Borough Council in the hope of getting a letter of support to aid the lottery bid. Instead the council sent a £10,000 donation. "That paid for the new saddle tank and effectively kick-started the restoration," S&KLR chairman Liz Fuller told *NGW*. Unsurprisingly the current Mayor of Swale, councillor Simon Clark, was among Saturday guests to the Three Brazils Weekend.

The railway was unsuccessful in its lottery bid and eventually raised the entire cost of the restoration, estimated at around £115,000, itself. Two major benefactors proved a big help, as did a pair of specific appeals made among the membership for 'Premier Stays' and 'Premier Parts'.

The most extensive work necessary was to the boiler, carried out by the standard-gauge North Norfolk Railway and including a new inner firebox and smokebox, and a complete retube. The bottom end also needed substantial attention including re-turning the wheels.

Much studying of photos in the railway's museum was carried out in an effort to return the loco to its appearance on arrival in Sittingbourne in 1905 – it now carries a deep green livery quite unlike the more familiar apple green of S&K locos today worn by Melior, and with heavy lining and its name in a large serif font on the saddle tank. Weather protection for the crew is spartan too, the sides and rear of the cab open to the elements.

Visiting workers

The celebration weekend was held in two parts, starting with an event for members and friends of the S&KLR on Saturday. Crews on the locos included members of other railways, among them the Kent & East Sussex, Bluebell and even the Welshpool & Llanfair, the two 2ft 6in gauge lines having struck up a strong relationship since Sittingbourne Bagnall 0-6-2T 'Superb' appeared at the Welsh line's Steam Gala in 2017 and 2018.

Sunday was a public day and a very successful one. On both days an intensive timetable saw 11 steam services from Kemsley Down and 10 from Sittingbourne Viaduct, with »



Kerr, Stuart's standards...

Kerr, Stuart & Co was founded in Glasgow in 1881 but moved to Stoke-on-Trent in 1892, with all its locomotives being built in the Staffordshire town.

The firm became well known for its standard locomotive designs, the classes that boasted trailing trucks allowing the use of large fireboxes becoming a trademark feature of Kerr, Stuart products. The Tattoo and Brazil 0-4-2 saddle tank narrow gauge locos, both of which appeared at the start of the 20th century, were typical of these designs, with inside or outside frames depending on the gauge they were ordered for.

The Brazil, reputedly named because the first example was built for a customer in the South American country, was in many ways a larger version of the Tattoo, with 9 x 15in cylinders giving it a rating of 84hp compared to the 36hp of the 7 x 12in cylindered Tattoo. There was also a class between them, with 8 x 12in cylinders and named Darwin.

Some of the earliest Brazils were 'Premier' and 'Leader', built for the new 2ft 6in line at Sittingbourne paper mill and delivered in 1905. Sittingbourne had two more Brazils, 'Excelsior' in 1908 and when a new mill was opened in 1924, 'Melior'. This was different

to its sisters as Kerr, Stuart had updated its motion to the Hackworth design. All four engines survived to be preserved.

Other Brazils went to various customers across the globe, as did many examples of the smaller Tattoo class. Two Tattoos that saw service in the UK were 'Stanhope', built in 1917 for Rossyth dockyard, later employed at Penrhyn Quarry and today preserved at the Apedale Valley Railway, and the Corris Railway's no 4 supplied in 1921, which was later preserved at the Tallylyn Railway as no 4 'Edward Thomas'. The Corris has since built its own Tattoo locomotive, no 7, completed in 2005.

After Kerr, Stuart collapsed in 1930 the goodwill to its designs was bought by Hunslet and the very last steam locomotive built by the original Hunslet Engine Company, in 1971, was an improved version of the Brazil class. This was 'Trangkil No.4', a 2ft gauge example which ran on sugar lines in Indonesia. It was repatriated in 2005 for preservation at the Statfold Barn Railway, where it regularly operates today – Statfold today owns the rights to produce new Hunslet steam locomotives, and is custodian to the Hunslet and thus Kerr, Stuart archives.

Two stages in the life of Premier. In the picture above, taken by David Mitchell, the loco is pictured with Bagnall 0-6-2T 'Superb' in Bowaters service at Kemsley Mill on 21st September 1966.

Editor Andrew Charman took the shot at right on his first visit to the S&KLR in April 1986. Premier at left was with Melior, then under restoration.





locos swapped at Sittingbourne. Visitors made the most of the rare opportunity to see the three Brazils in steam together, one of *NGW*'s regular correspondents telling us that "the trains were rammed full!"

While Premier was the star of the weekend it did not quite take all the limelight – sister Leader was the centrepiece of a small ceremony on Sunday afternoon. As mentioned this loco has always been owned in preservation by a consortium of S&KLR members and the ceremony saw it officially handed over to the railway's ownership.

Above: They may be sisters but each has its own distinct profile.

Above right: Spot the track! Proper industrial narrow gauge as Premier approaches Kemsley Down.

Below: Premier is ready to head its train back to Sittingbourne as Melior arrives.

Having completed its final weekend of duties, Leader faces some time on the sidelines. Its overhaul is expected to cost at least £150,000 and won't begin until the completion of the 10-year overhaul of Bagnall 0-6-2T 'Superb', which last ran in 2018, and sister Bagnall 'Triumph' – currently stored in Kemsley yard but with a sign next to it stating that the loco is too under overhaul.

Enduring appeal

Your editor was born far too late to see the line in its Bowaters years (something I regret!). I made my first

visit to Sittingbourne in 1986 and have always enjoyed returning to the Kent line, even though having prior to 2007 been the closest narrow gauge railway to my Surrey home, it's now one of the furthest from *NGW* Towers in mid Wales.

The overall memory from that first visit some 36 years ago was of an authentic industrial railway, a rare thing by the 1980s though it had to be said that much of the surroundings of the line appeared to be a bit of a wasteland of disused industry – all rusting pipes and gantries.

Certainly when five years later I



took my then new wife on a day out to the line, she wasn't quite as impressed with the scenery compared to the railways ridden on our first holiday to Wales earlier that year...

We rode in the semi-open former Chattenden & Upnor Railways carriages, which had spent 17 years in Wales on the Welshpool & Llanfair before being bought by the S&K in 1978 to work just 12 miles away from their former home. I leant out to take photos of the loco literally parting the greenery growing on either side of the route – and as this was early in the season suffered severe hayfever as a result! That did not exactly help Rosemary's enthusiasm for the industrial narrow gauge...

The line's surroundings have changed over the years – much of the industrial desolation has made way for new building, Asda and Morrison's superstores, a new main road crossing over the railway, while the control of the lineside vegetation is rather better these days.

Challenges met

That the railway is here today becomes all the more impressive when you consider that it is run by one of the smaller groups in UK preservation and one that has faced many challenges, most notably almost two years with no trains in 2009-10 when the paper mill was closed and the land that was leased to the railway passed to new owners.

Not until 2012 did trains return to the full line, including the half-mile long concrete viaduct that



Above: It was a special weekend for Leader too, the loco working its last trains before expiry of its boiler ticket.

Below: Premier and train traverse the signature feature of the S&KLR, the concrete viaduct that runs for more than half a mile.

leads to Sittingbourne station. And this viaduct, a listed structure, has been a constant headache, with more than £100,000 invested in its upkeep over a 10-year period.

Despite this the railway has progressed, celebrating its 50th anniversary of preservation in 2019 while also managing, thankfully, to retain that industrial atmosphere. The trackwork, for example, is these days to the highest standards in the line's preservation history – in an age of close monitoring by authorities such as the Office of Rail and Road it has to be. Yet as the picture on the

facing page clearly demonstrates, Sittingbourne trains still make their way along two lines of rails snaking through a mainly green corridor – this is proper industrial narrow gauge, and long may it remain so. **NGW**

More Information

Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway trains run on Sundays, as well as Wednesdays in August and the Summer Bank Holiday Monday, until the end of September when the line stages its traditional two-day end-of-season Gala. More details are on the website at www.sklr.net



Dutch Steam Trams



James Waite profiles some highly distinctive lines and their locomotives.

In 1879 the Dutch government introduced a law authorising the construction of steam tramways. They could be built on the roadside verge, so avoiding the land purchases that were needed for conventional railways. Some were standard gauge and enjoyed physical connection with the main line railway network, but to further economise others adopted the narrow gauge.

The trams had to run slowly but the low construction costs resulted in the tramways becoming an important means of transport in many parts of the country and it wasn't long before their distinctive four- and six-coupled locos became a familiar sight within

the Dutch countryside, often with enclosed casings and with skirt tanks which helped protect the motion.

The steam-tram concept also found its way to the Dutch colonies, lines built including one to 3ft 6in gauge in Java, in what is now Indonesia, and a metre gauge line in Surinam in South America.

The box-shaped machines probably owe their origin to the British Merryweather company. A standard-gauge example, no 2 of the Rijnlandsche Stoomtramweg Maatschappij (Merryweather 110/1881), is now the oldest surviving tram locomotive anywhere in the country.

Above: 0-6-0Tm no 54 (Orenstein & Koppel 8065/1915) stands at Ouddorp on 24th August 2005. At the time it was painted in the plain green livery that it carried in the last years before the 1965 closure. Five of these locos were built in 1915.

Photos by James Waite, taken 18th August 2018 except where stated.

For many years from 1932 this loco was displayed in the Dutch national railway museum at Utrecht and survived extensive damage during a bombing raid in 1943, but since 2017 it has been a static exhibit at the standard gauge Hoorn-Medemblik heritage line. It was one of five supplied for the opening of one of the country's first tramways which ran between Leiden and Katwijk, to the east of The Hague.

In 1881 the Arnhem municipality organised a competition to find the most suitable loco for its line, and Merryweather, Krauss, Hohenzollern and SLM took part. The Krauss loco won, but Mr JG Rueb, one of the judges, much preferred the Merryweather, largely because it was fitted with inside cylinders which were better protected from roadway dirt. This led directly to his firm Backer & Rueb, based at Breda, entering the market with a refinement of the Merryweather design, and the firm soon became the pre-eminent builders of the type.

Their locos were distinctly small, often just 3.2 metres long. They were powerful and could be supplied for any gauge between 750mm and standard. Joy valve gear was often fitted since it was mounted higher up than other types and, again, less prone to damage from dirt. One pleasing touch was the wavy ribbon design of their worksplates, though this was apparently based on a similar plate on a Hohenzollern machine.





However they faced stiff, and somewhat unfair, competition. At the time the Netherlands imposed no import tariffs on complete locomotives, but they did on the parts which Backer & Rueb incorporated into its locos, with the result that foreign builders enjoyed a price advantage.

Amongst others these included SLM, which used the indirect drive designed by its proprietor Charles Brown. The cylinders were mounted high up and the drive was transmitted by rocker shafts. Germany was no stranger to steam tramways either and among its builders Henschel, and to a lesser extent Hohenzollern, gained significant shares of the Dutch market. Henschel's standard loco was somewhat larger than Backer & Rueb's, typically 4.3 metres long.

One of the largest systems was the 3ft 6in gauge Rotterdamsche Tramweg Maatschappij, which served the islands and countryside to the southwest of Rotterdam. It was a progressively managed concern, pioneering the multi-modal container concept because so many of its routes involved ferry crossings. As a result it proved unusual amongst tramway companies because it became a significant ferry operator.

The system was badly affected by the floods which devastated much of

Facing page below: James was given a cab ride on his first visit to the Tramweg Maatschappij in Rotterdam in August 2005. No 54 runs along the dyke on its way to Port Zélande.

Above: No 57 (9194) was part of the second batch of three O&K locos delivered in 1920. Seen in the engine shed at Ouddorp, it has never run in preservation.

Above right: A rear view of no 54 at Ouddorp, emphasising its unusual proportions.

Below: No 54, repainted in its earlier fully-lined green livery, has just left Port Zélande. The attractive leading carriage was built by Haine St Pierre in 1905.



WAITE'S WORLD

the Dutch coast in 1953, but it soldiered on with a reduced network until its last line closed in 1965, helped by a healthy seasonal traffic in sugar beet. Diesels first appeared in 1924, but the system retained several steam locos until the closure.

Although it operated a significant network of bus services in its later years it continued to run passenger trams, and was still investing in further diesel-powered ones as late as the early 1960s.

Heritage operations

By the time of its closure the RTM had become the last functioning narrow gauge steam tramways in the country, and it survived long enough for preservationists to take an active interest. In the following year they started a heritage operation out of the old RTM harbour station at Hellevoetsluis, one of its principal ferry ports. But hostility from the local council eventually forced them to seek a new home in 1989 near the coast of the island of Goeree-Overflakkee at Ouddorp, once the terminus of an RTM branch.

The heritage railway now runs along the Brouwersdam, a dyke which separates the North Sea and the Grevelingenmeer. It was built between 1965 and 1971 as part of works to protect the coast from a repetition of the 1953 floods.

When I first visited in 2005 the line's southern terminus was at Port Zélande, a resort area midway along the dyke. The railway has become a hugely popular tourist attraction, helped considerably by the presence of the Center Parcs holiday complex next to Port Zélande station. It has now been extended to the village of Scharendijke on Schouwen-Duiveland, close to Renesse, home to a noted medieval church with a tower which is a striking feature of the view from all around, including the RTM's trains. Renesse was once served by another RTM branch, but it was severely damaged in 1953 and did not reopen.

Thanks to their early start the preservationists were able to rescue a comprehensive collection of the RTM's equipment, including the four surviving 0-6-0 steam tram locos, one from Henschel and three from Orenstein & Koppel, built between 1913 and 1920. They are distinctive machines, and are fitted with skirt tanks although they lack the square casings.

The RTM once owned 16 classic Backer & Rueb 0-4-0Tms built between 1899 and 1904, along with six similar ones built by Werkspoor in 1906, but they all disappeared between 1946 and 1956. The preservation society is building a replica of no 37, the last survivor, »





though it is likely to be several years before it is completed.

Also preserved are some historic diesels and no fewer than 13 of the RTM's beautiful period carriages, fitted with large windows and containing splendid saloons, along with many freight wagons.

Geldersche tramways

The De Graafschap district, to the east of Arnhem in Gelderland province, was also noted for its narrow gauge tramway system, which included three lines that crossed the border into Germany. They were built by several companies, some to 3ft 6in gauge and others to 750mm.

With considerable encouragement from the Dutch government they all came under common management in the 1930s by the Geldersche Tramwegen, the largest of the companies, while retaining their separate ownership structure.

The new organisation soon embarked on a much-needed

Above: Geldersche Tramwegen loco no 7 'Vrijland' at the National Smalspoormuseum – May 2007.

Above right: The distinctive plates on Geldersche Tramwegen no 13 'Silvolde', including Backer & Rueb's wavy ribbon worksplate – May 2007.

Below: PNKA 0-4-0Tm no B1903 stands beside the water tower at Tulungagung, eastern Java, in August 1978.



rationalisation scheme. At least one isolated 3ft 6in line was abandoned, and the lines deemed worthy of retention were converted to 750mm gauge. Unlike the RTM the lines replaced their passenger services by buses, though they were restored for the duration of the Second World War. Freight operations lasted until 31st August 1957.

They, too, dispensed with the overall casings on their later steam locos, but happily one of the classic Backer & Rueb machines and two Henschel ones have been preserved. The latter originated on the Tramweg Maatschappij Zutphen-Emmerik as its nos 3 'Hummelo' (Henschel 6014/1902) and 7 'Vrijland' (Henschel 6848/1904), and were renumbered 603 and 607 by GT in the 1930s.

They were the last of seven of these locos in service. Three were withdrawn in 1935 and 1936 and the other two on the closure of the Zutphen line, when nos 603 and 607 became the outright property of GT. In 1955, Hummelo was bought back by Henschel to become a valued exhibit in the company museum at Kassel, where it is still displayed by the firm's successors. Vrijland moved to the Utrecht museum late in 1957.

GT nos 12 'Ulft' (R&B 116/1895) and 13 'Silvolde' (R&B 182/1900) were two non-standard locos supplied by Backer & Rueb, distinctive features including a boiler pitched 100mm lower than normal

to reduce their centre of gravity. This was achieved by waisting in the lower firebox to fit between the frames.

These locos were always owned by the GT, along with four standard machines built between 1887 and 1891 which were all set aside in 1929 and written off in 1934. Ulft suffered a similar fate in 1935, but Silvolde became the GT's works shunter at Doetinchem after its years in regular service were over.

The loco was still there when GT celebrated its 75th anniversary in 1956 and marked the occasion by introducing heritage trains, consisting of an original carriage, no AB48, and van no GZ41 hauled by Silvolde. The trains proved so popular that they returned the following year, making their last run between Doetinchem and Doesburg on the day of the closure.

The entire train joined Vrijland at the Utrecht museum in 1975 but went into store 20 years later. In 2000 they moved to the National Smalspoormuseum at the Valkenburgse Meer, a former sandpit which now forms a recreational lake close to Leiden, original home of the standard gauge Merryweather loco. Vrijland followed them there in 2003.

They all remained static exhibits until 2019, when grant funding allowed a start to be made on restoring Vrijland to working order. The work includes a new boiler and narrowing its gauge to 700mm to suit the museum's operating line. While this work continues currently trains are worked by a number of industrial locos. They are of great interest, but Vrijland will be an especially valued member of the working fleet when it becomes the first classic Dutch narrow gauge tram loco to run again.

Java and Surinam

The tramways in Java and Surinam outlived their counterparts in the Netherlands, and possessed some locos fitted with the classic boxy casings. I found PNKA 0-4-0Tm no B1903 (Hohenzollern 1120/1898) in steam at Tulungagung in eastern Java in 1978, though its sole function appeared to be to supply steam for a water tower pump and I didn't see it move. It hasn't survived but three similar locos are preserved, two Beyer Peacocks and another Hohenzollern.

The Surinam railway probably operated until the 1980s. Several of its locos survived until about ten years ago but have all now been scrapped with the sole exception of 0-6-0 skirt tank 'Para' (Backer & Rueb 300/1916). The RTM and Geldersche machines are the only survivors of the narrow gauge tram locos in the Netherlands. **NGW**



Weathering the conditions...

The photographers who regularly submit their content for our pages found plenty of trains to focus on over the past month – and a range of climate conditions to cope with too...



Above right: *Karl Heath* was in just the right place to catch some interesting and attractive light as Hunslet 0-4-OST 'Elidir' (493/1889) raised steam on a sunny morning at the Llanberis Lake Railway on 28th May...

Right: ...while *Ben Bucki* was about to get soaked by a rare (in the editor's experience) Welsh thunderstorm as he photographed fellow Hunslet 'Britomart' (707/1899) on a goods working at the Ffestiniog Railway on 3rd June.

Overleaf: The 'Lady Ann' doesn't appear to be going anywhere soon as Lynton & Barnstaple-style 2-6-2T 'Yeo' sets off back to Fairbourne from Penrhyn Point during the Fairbourne Railway Gala on 30th May. Visiting Littlehampton Miniature Railway 2-6-2T 'Christopher' awaits its next turn in the loop.

Photo: Andrew Charman





**NARROW
GAUGE
WORLD**





Above: For Austria read Powys... A photo charter booking on the Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway on 16th May paired ZB2 'Zillertal', on hire from the Zillertalbahn in Austria, with a highly appropriate train comprised of the four-wheeled Austrian carriages that have been donated to the Welsh line by the Zillertalbahn over the years, starting in 1968.
Photo: Ralph Ward

Below: Four days earlier *Matt Ditch* was again enjoying the authentic industrial surroundings of the Beamish Living Museum in County Durham, focusing on the recently restored Andrew Barclay 0-4-0WT 'Glyder'.





Above: The Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway is a master of Gala entertainment, very much demonstrated by this shot from the Kent 15-inch gauge line's 95th Anniversary Gala on 14th-15th May. This parallel run on the double track between Hythe & New Romney naturally featured locomotives 9 and 5, Canadian-style Yorkshire Engine Co 4-6-2 'Winston Churchill' and Davey Paxman 4-8-2 'Hercules'.

Below: The very different proportions of the UK's two leading 15-inch gauge lines, the 'narrow-gauge' Ravenglass & Eskdale Railway and the 'scale' Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway are clearly indicated here during the latter's 95th Anniversary Gala. The R&ER's Heywood 0-8-2 'River Irt' was piloting – and overshadowing – the Romney's Davey Paxman 4-6-2 'Green Goddess' near Dungeness.

Photos: Steve Town



Tracks by the Tyne

Donald Brooks looks back at the Gateshead Garden Festival railway that was open for just 157 days.

It was a good year in 1990 for the 15-inch gauge in the east of England. By the time the Bure Valley Railway opened in Norfolk on 10th July, another new line had already been in operation for a couple of months up in Tyne & Wear. And although the Bure Valley almost went out of business following financial difficulties after its first season, there was never any intention that the line at Gateshead would outlive the year.

The perceived success of the 1984 Liverpool International Garden Festival (*NGW159*) led to four further festivals, at two-year intervals

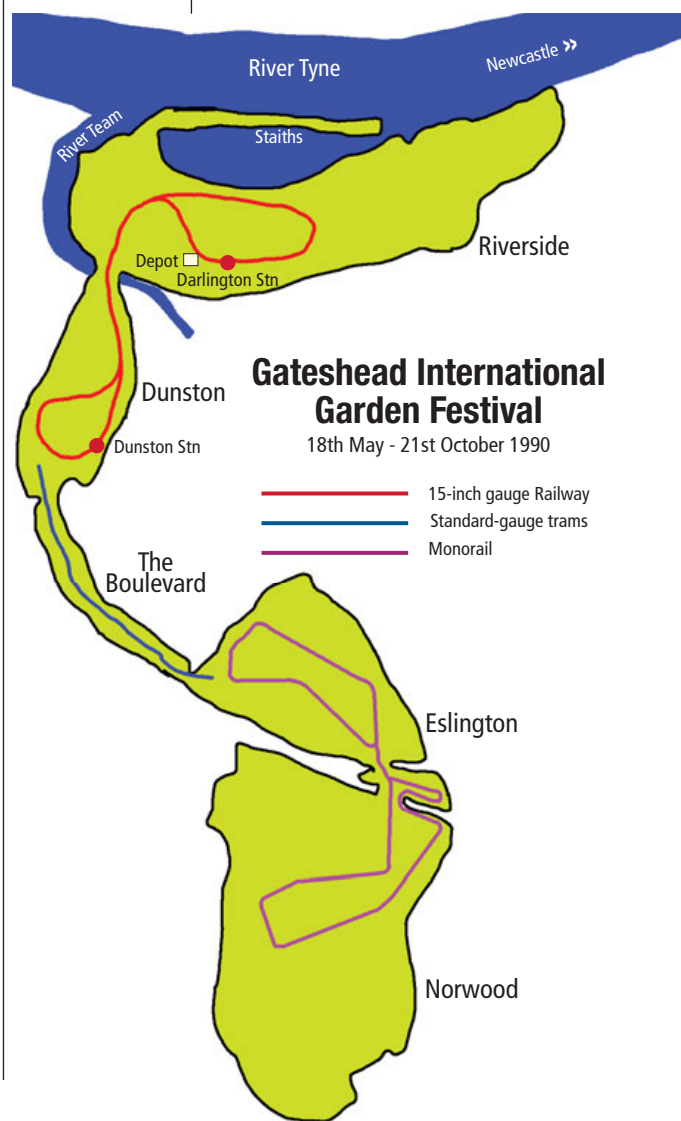
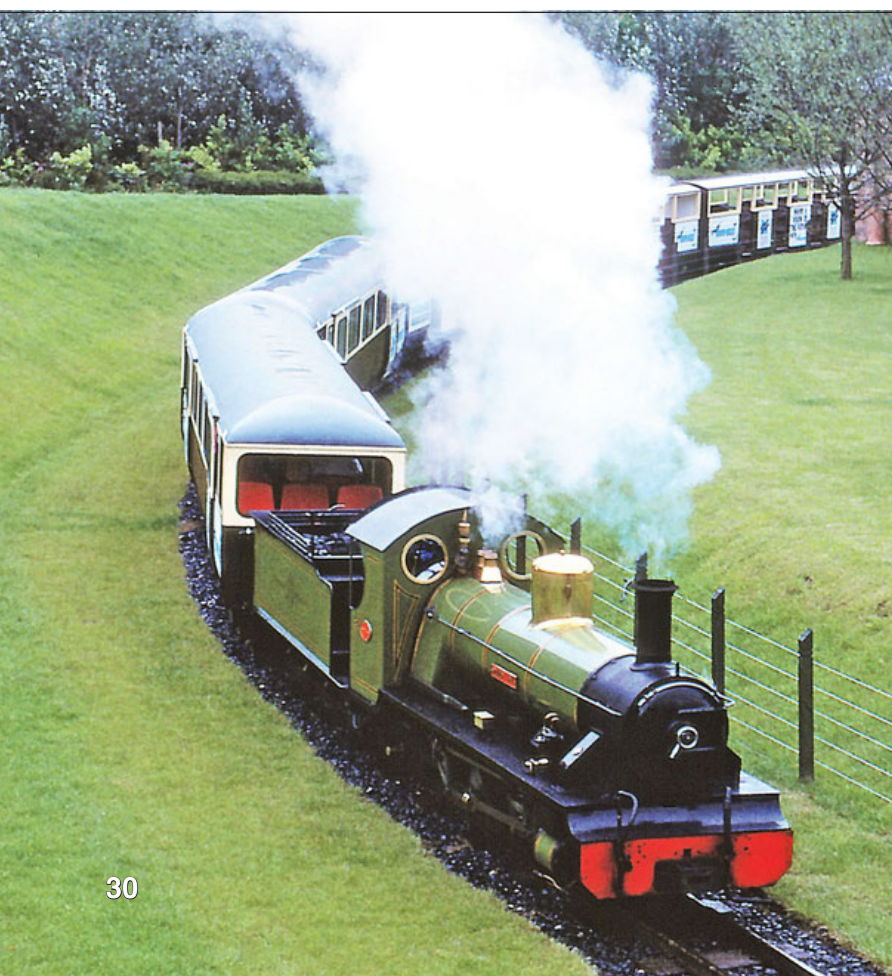
– Stoke-on-Trent (1986), Glasgow (1988), Gateshead (1990) and Ebbw Vale (1992). All were intended to reclaim the derelict post-industrial landscapes in which they were held and to contribute towards wider regeneration of the host town or city.

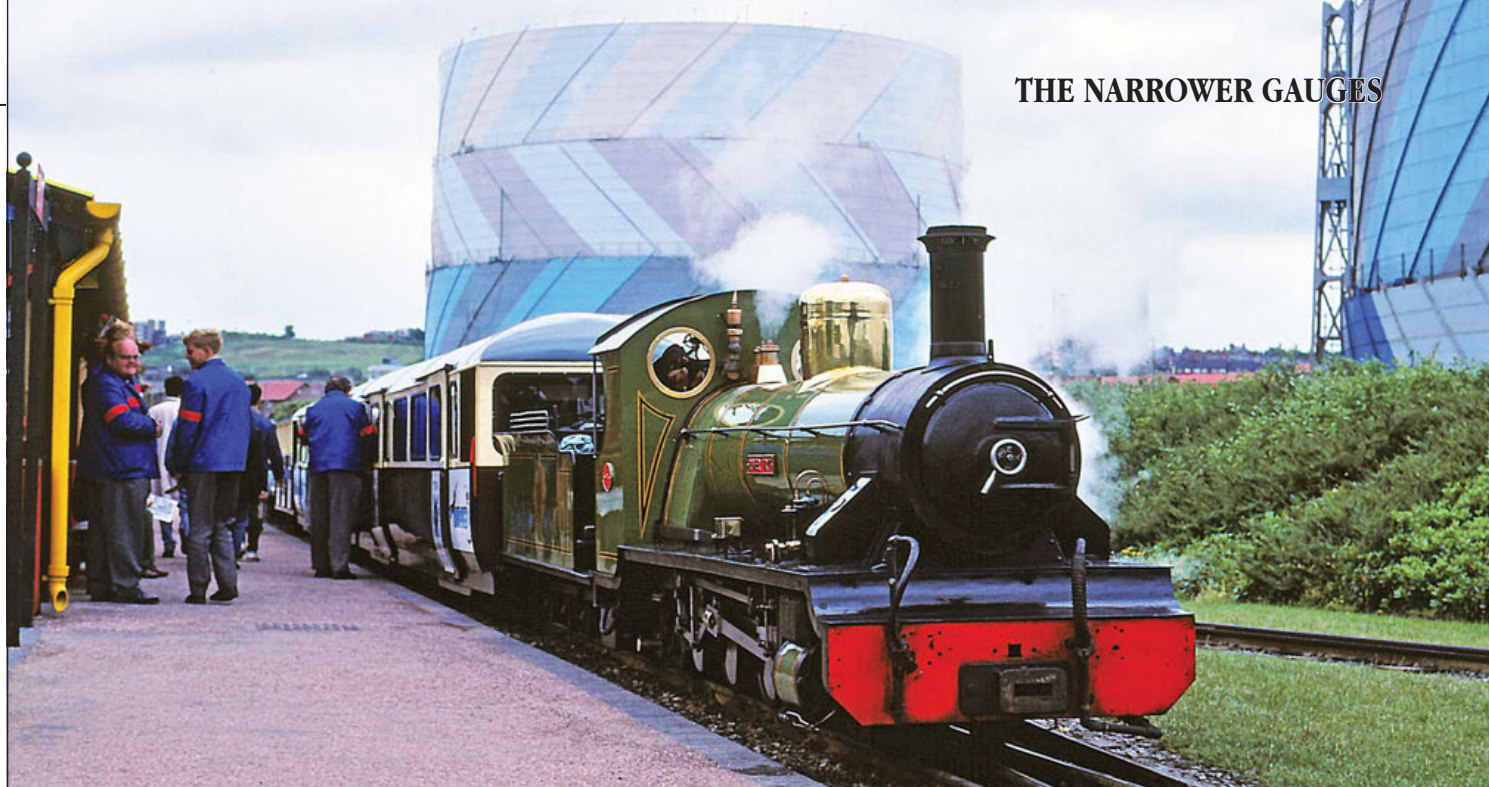
Following the example of Liverpool each of the subsequent festivals incorporated one or more railways, designed to provide a ride around the site, to fulfil a transport function or both – and in all cases the main line was narrow gauge. Severn Lamb provided new motive power for both Stoke and Glasgow. Stoke used

Above: 'John Southland' runs alongside the Tyne towards Darlington station. Dunston Staiths, given a £1m renovation to use as a festival promenade, is in the background.

four 1ft 11¾in gauge four-wheel diesel-hydraulic locos of uninspired design, while Glasgow went for three 60cm gauge machines based on the Great Northern Stirling Singles, with diesel engines in their tenders.

The hillside Ebbw Vale site was served by a 3ft 6in gauge funicular, with the short 7¼in gauge Swansea Bay Railway also providing rides in





the Swansea City Council Garden. It was the Gateshead railway, though, that most closely resembled Liverpool by adopting the 15in gauge and using live steam on its circuit.

A unique site

The Gateshead Festival was held alongside the Tyne, not far west of the city centre bridges to Newcastle and close to Dunston railway station. Whereas the four other festivals had been based on coherent sites, Gateshead was unique in that it was divided into four zones, separated by a railway, main road and the River Team (a tributary of the Tyne), requiring good internal transport to bring it all together.

The Riverside zone bordered the Tyne and was dominated by the 1893 Dunston Staiths, used by trains from County Durham to load coal into ships on the river and said to be Europe's largest wooden structure. A bridge across the River Team led south to the smaller Dunston zone, from which a long avenue known as The Boulevard connected with Eslington and finally Norwood.

These last two zones were served by a novelty monorail circuit with fairground-style caterpillar trains. Uniting the whole site from north to south was a Dotto road train, while a standard gauge tramway ran the length of The Boulevard, using cars borrowed from Crich museum.

The 15in gauge railway served the two northern zones, Riverside and Dunston, with a station in each. It was roughly two kilometres long and consisted of a short single-track section, crossing a 100m bridge over the River Team to connect long balloon loops in the two zones. The station in Riverside was known as

Facing page far left: 'River Irt' curves at the southern point of the Dunston loop.

Left: Map showing how the railway fitted into the various garden festival zones.

Above: River Irt in Darlington station – the gas holders of the Redheugh Gasworks are dominant in the background.

Below: River Irt on the points of Darlington station loop. The track in front of its smokebox led to the shed.

Photos by Donald Brooks, July 1990

Darlington and was not far from the Riverside entrance to the site, accessible by bus and special ferry service from Newcastle.

All internal transport was included in the £6 site admission charge. Although it was mainly the road train and the tramway that performed an actual transport function, the 15in gauge railway could be used by anyone wanting to make a single journey between Riverside and Norwood.

The Ravensglass & Eskdale Railway (R&ER) was heavily involved in the Garden Festival line from its inception. The R&ER provided new rail for the main circuit and secondhand lengths for the sidings, which led to a spacious two-road shed off the Riverside station loop. Both stations had a single platform and the route round the Dunston zone was all plain track, with neither loops nor sidings.

For tracklaying, which started in the summer of 1989, the R&ER provided its four-wheeled battery-

electric locomotive 'Greenbat', Greenwood & Batley 2782 of 1957, along with a flat wagon and charging equipment for the locomotive.

Like Liverpool, the line was not easy to work, with sharp curves and gradients as steep as 1 in 40, including climbs in both directions to the Team bridge. Trains followed a figure-of-eight route, running clockwise in Riverside and anti-clockwise in Dunston. Their drivers were recruited locally, while training was provided by the R&ER.

Four locomotives

Greenbat returned to Ravensglass on 13th March 1990, following the arrival of three R&ER locos which were to work the Gateshead line. Two steam engines, 0-8-2 'River Irt', the oldest working 15in gauge steam loco in the world, and 2-6-2 'Northern Rock', built at Ravensglass in 1976, were accompanied by 1969 4-6-4DH 'Shelagh of Eskdale'. Both River Irt and Shelagh were veterans of the Liverpool Garden Festival and both »





share a Heywood heritage, with Shelagh incorporating components from the 0-6-0T 'Ella' and River Irt rebuilt from 0-8-0T 'Muriel'.

The fourth locomotive in service at Gateshead came from the Romney, Hythe & Dymchurch Railway (RH&DR). This was Bo-Bo diesel 'John Southland', built by TMA Engineering in 1983 primarily to work school trains serving Southlands Comprehensive in New Romney, now the Marsh Academy. These trains, which ran from 1977 to 2015, were initially steam worked, the principle of diesel operation being established by borrowing Shelagh from the R&ER. John Southland was later renamed 'J B Snell' after the RH&DR's former general manager.

Like the locomotives, much of the rolling stock had a garden festival past. Gateshead purchased ten former Liverpool bogie carriages and hired a further five from the RH&DR. Completing the roster were five Maxi carriages, built new at Steamtown Carnforth, which went to the R&ER after the Festival closed.

The 20 carriages were formed into

three mixed sets of six or seven cars each. Two or three trains were in operation simultaneously, running at least every ten minutes and controlled by radio using a system similar to the one pioneered in the UK by the R&ER. For line operation the two steam locos and 'John Southland' were preferred, with Shelagh usually restricted to shunting duties.

Back at Ravenglass the R&ER was celebrating the 75th anniversary of the first stages of the line's reopening as a 15in gauge route in 1915, following the closure of the original 3ft gauge railway two years earlier. The main festivities were held at the end of August, with visiting Bassett-Lowke engines typifying motive power from the early days.

Despite three 'home' locomotives being at Gateshead the R&ER still succeeded in operating all its scheduled services over the season, helped by hiring 4-6-2 'Black Prince' from the RH&DR. Although bringing a Romney engine to Ravenglass to fill a gap created by moving R&ER locos to Gateshead may seem an unnecessarily

Above: With two Maxi carriages at the head of its train, River Irt pulls away from Darlington and heads for the bridge over the Team. The building immediately behind the train is the railway's shed and works.

Below: One of the short tunnels is approached by John Southland as it passes the ornamental maze on its way through Riverside. The dull weather may have accounted for the light loadings on the trains.



complicated series of moves, it certainly added interest for the 15in gauge enthusiast and gave the R&ER an extra visiting engine for its anniversary year.

The Gateshead festival site had a strongly industrial past, with Dunston Staiths not the only reminder. Riverside was the location of Redheugh Gasworks and the group of gasholders just outside the boundary of the festival provided a distinctive background. Dunston had also once been the site of a major railway yard, Norwood sidings, but no trace survived.

Throughout its route the 15in gauge was well integrated into the new landscape, its route including three short tunnels and a staffed level crossing as well as both over and under bridges.

Five successful months

The Gateshead Garden Festival opened on 18th May and ran for 157 days, closing on 21st October. The site, in which over £50m had been invested, saw more than three million visitors, though their experience differed slightly from Liverpool in that Gateshead had fewer specifically garden-related features and more of the character of a general exhibition in an attractively landscaped setting.

Like all the festivals the event's legacy remains open to debate, though Gateshead today, with the Sage music centre, BALTIC Art Centre and the celebrated Angel of the North sculpture, is a much more vibrant place with a more confident sense of identity than 30 years ago.

On the final day of the festival River Irt, Northern Rock and John Southland provided a three-train service, but within three days two had returned home. Northern Rock travelled directly to the Bure Valley for the line's inaugural gala weekend. Shelagh remained at Gateshead a little longer to work the track-lifting trains and by December all the new rail had been transported to the R&ER for reuse. The borrowed rolling stock also went home and the ten carriages owned by the festival were put up for sale.

The Gateshead railway may not have been quite as high profile as its Liverpool predecessor and there may not have been such long queues for its trains, but it still gave a lot of pleasure to both general visitors and enthusiasts alike. Today the Riverside and Dunston festival areas have been redeveloped, mainly for housing. It is still possible to cross the bridge over the Team used by the railway, now part of a pedestrian and cycle route, but otherwise only photographs and memories remain. **NGW**

Remarkable Railcars...

Phil Horton outlines a surprising saga that embraces Yugoslavia, Portugal, Peru – and possibly Mozambique!

Until the end of the 1960s Yugoslavia was served by an extensive system of narrow gauge railways, most of them built by the Austrians to their military gauge of 760mm. The longest of these linked the capital Belgrade (now in Serbia) with the Adriatic Coast at Dubrovnik (now in Croatia). A series of other 760mm gauge lines connected with it including a branch to the naval depot at Zelenica on the Gulf of Kotor.

My encounter with the Zelenica branch was described in *NGW* 24 of Feb/March 2003. I had found myself there while on a camping trip across

Above: Yugoslavia: Class B802 diesel railcar waits at Hercegnovi on the Adriatic coast in August 1967.

Below: Class B802 railcars were sold to Portuguese Railways in 1980 and operated as Class 9700 units on the Corgo line. In May 1991 9714 and 9713 are near Carrazedo with a train for Vila Real. Photo: Maarten van der Velden

Europe from London to Istanbul with four university friends. The highlight for me, but not necessarily my friends, was seeing the heavy mid-day mixed train heading from the coast up into the mountains. This train was hauled by two ancient ex-Austrian 0-8-2 'compounds' built by Krauss at Linz at the turn of the 19th century.

We stayed in the area for about a week so I became familiar with the daily sequence of trains. One that I considered to be less impressive than the others arrived at the harbour-front station at Hercegnovi at around lunchtime, worked by a modern stainless steel two-car diesel unit.

I discovered much later that this was one of JZ's Class B802 four-car diesel units, built in Yugoslavia by Duro Dakovic with Fiat engines during the early 1960s. They were often worked as two-car sets as seen at Hercegnovi. This meant that there was a driving unit at only one end so at Zelenica this had to be uncoupled to use the turntable there. It was to be more than 40 years before I encountered any of these units again.

Railcars in Portugal

While the Yugoslavian lines all closed in around 1970, elsewhere in Europe the narrow gauge lasted much longer. As regularly featured in *NGW* some survive to the present day. European »





Left: Two Class 9500 railcars, 9501 and 9502, built on the chassis of earlier Yugoslavian Class 9700 units. They are at Regua, Portugal, with a service from Vila Real in May 1998.

Lower left: A single Class 9500 at Mirandela bus interchange in May 1998. It was on a shuttle service to Carvalhais, withdrawn in December 2018.

Bottom left: Two of the older Class 9100 units, 9102 and 9103, used on the Tamega line. They are next to Livracao shed in October 2002 and at left is one of the Class 9500s about to replace them.

Below: Peru: No 903, one of the unrebuilt Class 9700 units sold off by Portuguese Railways, at Machu Pichu on a tourist train. Photo: David Almeida/Wikipedia Commons

Facing page: Two more views from Maarten van der Velden on the Congo line – 9713 and 9714 in the hills near Alvacoës (upper right) and at right nos 9719 and 9703 at Alvacoës, 7.25km from Regua.

Photos all taken in Portugal except where stated. Uncredited photos by Phil Horton

at work on the Tamega, while the Corgo line was operated by modern-looking CP single-unit Class 9500 railcars. What was left of the Tua line was worked by Class 9020 Bo-Bo diesel-electric locomotives, built by Alsthom in 1976.

As we had only time to travel on one of the branches we opted for the Tua line and so enjoyed a run with loco-hauled stock behind one of the diesel locomotives. At the terminus we found another Class 9500 unit running in the green livery of the Metro de Mirandela and operating a shuttle service to Carvalhais, 4km along the former Tua line to Bragança. A newly opened bus station adjacent to the railway at Mirandela formed an excellent transport exchange hub.

I returned to the Douro Valley in October 2002 as part of a steam-hauled rail tour organised by the Portuguese Traction Group for the Warwickshire Railway Society. On the Tamega line Class 9100 railcars were being replaced by the more modern Class 9500 units.

During our 1998 visit to Regua my friend and I had found a dozen or so long-retired 2-4-6-0 Mallet tanks still arrayed around the mixed-gauge turntable but by 2002 several had been purchased for preservation. Their places were taken by a number of very down-at-heel looking railcars. Despite my general rule of photographing everything in sight, I failed to take any shots of these units.

Yugoslavian origins

It was only when back on our special train that someone mentioned these railcars had originally come from Yugoslavia. They were in fact ex-JZ Class B802 railcars that were sold to Portugal in 1980! They were converted to metre gauge to become CP Class 9700 but in Portugal they had proved to be unreliable and several were fitted with new engines.

They nevertheless lasted until 2001 and it was surprising that we did not see any during our 1998 visit.

countries once noted for their narrow gauge included Portugal but, apart from a very short visit to Porto in 1973 when the lines were still predominantly steam-worked, it was not until May 1998 that I returned to Porto with a friend for a more lengthy stay.

By then much had changed on Portuguese Railways (CP) but travel on metre gauge trains was still possible, albeit with diesel traction. These included commuter trains from Porto (Trindade) station to Lousado and Senhora da Hora which still run today. Porto is also the gateway to the Douro Valley, well known for its Port-producing vineyards.

The broad-gauge (5ft 6in) line ran the whole length of the north side of the valley to Barca de Alva before

crossing into Spain. En route it passed four side valleys which in the 1970s boasted lengthy metre gauge branch lines. (*Steam operations on all four were described in Waite's World in NGW161 and 162 – Ed*)

Each line was named after the river valley it followed. The first, which left the main line at Livracao, was the 'Tamega line', the second at Regua, the 'Corgo line', the third at Tua, the 'Tua line'. The fourth at Pocinho had been the 'Sabor line' but this had closed completely in 1988.

Three years later the Tamega, Corgo and Tua lines had all lost their northern halves and only ran as far as Amarante (13km), Vila Real (25km) and Mirandela (45km) respectively. During our visit we found Class 9100 units, built by NOHAB in 1949 still



Latterly at least, only the two power cars appear to have been used. This was not the end for some of the units as they were exported to Peru to work the 914mm gauge Inca Rail service to Machu Pichu. Others are reported to have been sold to Mozambique.

Further research has revealed that in the mid-1990s the chassis of nine of the Class 9700 railcars had been used to build the Class 9500 units. This involved entirely new bodywork along with more powerful Volvo engines with a driving compartment at each end. Five were painted in red livery for the Tamago, Corgo and Tua lines and four in green livery for the Metro de Mirandela as seen during my 1998 visit.

The new units were to have a short life as the Tamago and Corgo lines both closed completely in 2009. The Tua line closed in 2012, apart from the Metro de Mirandela which lasted until December 2018. Some of the Class 9500 units are reported to have also since been sold to Peru while some Class 9020 diesel-electrics have gone to Madagascar.

In sourcing photos for this article I came to regret my decision not to take any of the Class 9700 units at Regua in 2002. Fortunately Dutch enthusiast Maarten van der Velden has kindly provided me with several splendid photos of the Class 9700 at work on the Corgo line in 1991. I did however, without knowing it, capture the rest of their evolution from the JZ Class B802 unit in 1967 to the CP Class 9500 some two decades later.

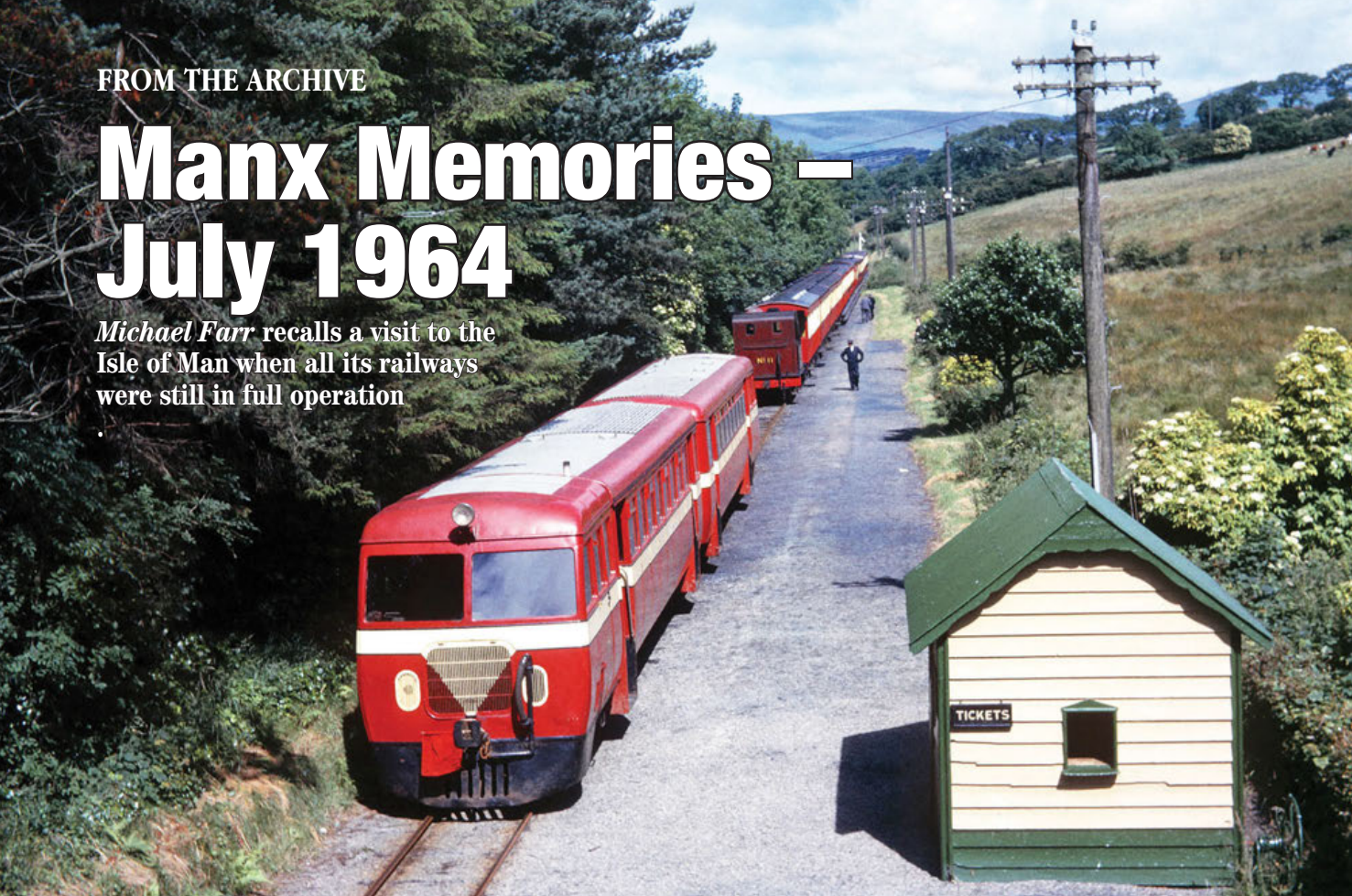
A photograph of Inca Rail unit no 903 at Machu Pichu is available on Wikipedia Commons but it would be interesting to know whether any **NGW** readers have come across these units working in either Peru or Mozambique, or a Class 9020 diesel in Madagascar? **NGW**



FROM THE ARCHIVE

Manx Memories – July 1964

Michael Farr recalls a visit to the Isle of Man when all its railways were still in full operation



At the end of my memories of my first Manx holiday in May 1963 (*NGW*157), I stated that I'd vowed to return the following summer while the peak timetable was operating. For 1964 I chose to visit just after the summer timetable had begun on 6th July, before the busiest holiday weeks and after the TT Races.

July's weather was much warmer and the increased service meant I could explore more fully, alighting at intermediate stations with a good chance of catching a following train to visit the next station along the line. For this facility I had to pay an additional 2s 6d for my runabout

ticket, which was now fifteen shillings (about £11 in today's money).

Arriving on Saturday 11th July, I was able to experience the solitary Sunday trains to take visitors to the open-air service at Kirk Braddan. In days of yore these carried many hundreds of passengers but by 1964 the service was operated with one locomotive and the railcars.

Two rakes of carriages were lined up in the Port Erin platforms at Douglas onto one of which Beyer Peacock 2-4-0T no 11 'Maitland' (4663/1905) coupled. Even before the 10.10am departure, the carriages were well filled and we set off for

Above: Former County Donegal railcars 19 and 20 wait at Kirk Braddan on 12th July 1964 to work the first of two trips back to Douglas after the nearby open-air church service. Note no 11 'Maitland' and its train behind.

Photos by Michael Farr

Braddan where passengers used the stepboards to alight on the ground-level cinder 'platform'.

Once everyone was heading off to the church grounds, Maitland continued on its way to run round the train at Union Mills. It then shunted the carriages onto the main line beyond the station and returned at speed, light engine to Douglas. Here it must have coupled to the second train set very quickly and left for Braddan in the path of the former 10.40am departure. Once again passengers detrained and the loco carried on to Union Mills.

Diesel traction

Shortly afterwards a purring sound heralded the arrival of the railcars with a few latecomers and the booking clerk from Douglas, who immediately opened up the tiny office at Braddan. He then hung poster boards on the road bridge advertising return trains (a fare of sixpence) in the hope that some of those who had walked to the service might be glad to ride back to Douglas for their lunch.

Meanwhile, Maitland had run around the second rake of carriages and coupled them to the first rake, bringing both trains back to Braddan. The rear set was then detached beyond the station limits and the front portion pulled forward just short of the railcars.

After the service the early birds were ushered into the railcars which



returned to Douglas. Next the front train was filled and, likewise, ran non-stop to Douglas. Maitland was detached from the carriages and returned light engine to Braddan to pick up the second set. When this was full it returned to Douglas where the loco was put on shed without delay.

Meanwhile the railcars made one last trip to Braddan to collect any latecomers and also the booking clerk who wasted no time in shutting up the station. Within minutes a silence fell on Douglas station as if no train had moved that day. This meant I was free to spend an afternoon on the horse trams.

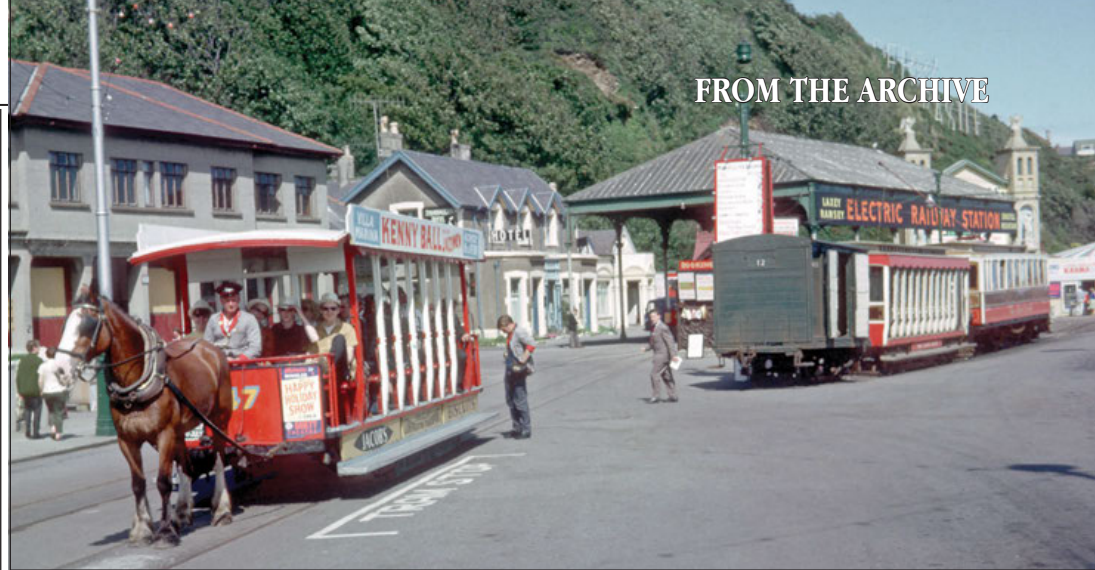
Four delightful days

For the summer of 1964 the former County Donegal diesel railcars were rostered for only one short trip to Kirk Michael and back, leaving Douglas at 2.10pm and returning at 4pm to bring home those who had visited the railway's pleasure grounds at Glen Wyllin. These were advertised as 'A beautiful Glen on the Western Shore' with a boating lake, children's playground and 'Luncheons, Teas and Snacks at reasonable charges'.

Due to my love of the railcars I sampled this working on my first weekday afternoon, 13th July. My abiding memory of the journey home with all the windows open was a party of young Irish nurses who led community singing at the tops of their voices!

On Tuesday, when I descended the steep hill to the Central Prom, I turned left instead of right and headed towards the Derby Castle terminus of the Manx Electric Railway to Laxey and Ramsey. I was lucky enough to be given a tour of Derby Castle workshops and later got up Snaefell on the 3ft 6in gauge trams, although the summit was unfortunately in mist.

Wednesday 15th July was to be



Facing page, below: Unhurried atmosphere at Kirk Braddan as Maitland waits to follow the railcar back to Douglas with the first of two rakes of carriages.

Above: Returning from Kirk Braddan the afternoon was spent on Douglas Horse Tramway. Manx Electric cars from Ramsey are connecting with a horse tram at Derby Castle.

Right: There was time to travel over the Manx Electric Railway, at Laxey meeting a Snaefell Mountain car on the left.

Below: On 13th July the two Irish railcars are at Kirk Michael on the afternoon trip to the railway's pleasure grounds near the station.



another day on the steam railway, travelling east and north. I caught the 10.25am from Douglas to Ramsey to alight at St John's so I could photograph and then board the following 10.40am to Peel in order to have a ride behind the railway's largest 2-4-0T, no 16 'Mannin' (6296/1926).

First thing on the Thursday I sought out the bus to Union Mills, a former station between Kirk Braddan and Crosby which no longer appeared in the timetable. This was the very first Manx station building I had modelled, taking the details from »





a photo in Ian Macnab's 1945 book on the railway. The previous year I had realised the curving platforms were attractively sited between high trees and so I planned to take photos of the two morning trains as they passed through.

The entrance gate was padlocked so I scaled the low wall. As I walked down to the tracks a thin plume of smoke indicated someone was working on the trackside. I was grilled by the trackworker who politely told me I was trespassing but I happened

Above: The former County Donegal railcars at Douglas on 18th July, no 20 leading. They will take a special party to Ramsey – an unusual destination for the diesels.

Left: No 5 'Mona' waits in a siding on 15th July as no 16 'Mannin' brings the 10.40am Douglas to Peel into St John's.

Below: On the same day Mannin was on light duties, hauling the two-carriage shuttle from St John's to Peel. It is preparing to return from Peel at 12.10pm.



to mention I had been with the railway's Mr Kincade. He had given me permission to visit the sheds at Douglas, but the ganger thought I had been given the run of the railway!

Thus I was able to photograph no 8 'Fenella' (3610/1894) on the 10.25am to Ramsey and no 12 'Hutchinson' (5126/1908) with the 10.40am to Peel as they threaded their trains around the reverse curve through the trees. I bade a polite farewell with thanks to the ganger and returned to Douglas in time to be able to experience the more intense service on the south line.

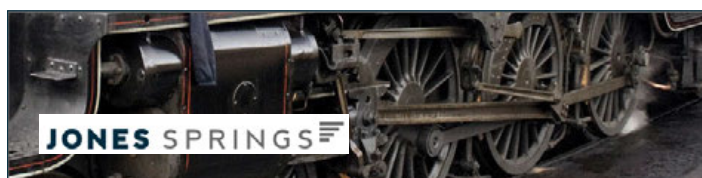
Final shots

Friday was a free day – with a 3pm flight home on the Saturday I had time to spend the morning at Douglas station where I found the railcars waiting ready to take a society special to Ramsey, my only opportunity to photograph car no 20 in the sun.

My return to Bristol from Ronaldsway coincided with the arrival of a large number of visitors. Dan-Air pressed into service its fish-bellied Bristol freighter fitted with seats, from which the Glaswegians flooded onto the runway using the vehicle loading ramps.

My own flight was delayed as the airline wanted to switch aircraft so that its luxury walnut-panelled Dakota built for a rich middle-eastern gentleman could be transferred from the Glasgow service to the Cardiff and Bristol route whose passengers were presumably expected to be more appreciative of the extra luxury! **NGW**





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St. Etienne-en-Caux

We spotlight the superb French-themed 009 layout built by Charles Insley.



You know how it goes, you wander around a model railway show and then something which is just a bit above the norm catches your eye. That was just the case for Phil Parker, editor of *NGW*'s sister magazine *GardenRail*, during the Bristol show at the end of April when he laid eyes on 'St. Etienne-en-Caux', a feast of

French-inspired excellence in 4mm scale 009 (9mm) gauge, and had to photograph it for our benefit!

The layout is the work of Charles Insley and was actually completed back in 2010. When we contacted him Charles told us that the inspiration for the layout's construction came firstly from a family holiday in northern France in 2007,

during which he visited the CF Baie de la Somme (CFBS) and the Chemin de fer Froissy-Dompierre.

Plenty of inspiration

He adds, however, that several other reasons sent him down the French modelling route; "reading my dad's copies of *Model Railway News* as a child and being captivated by the articles by the late



Left: This photo clearly shows just how compact the entire layout is, yet it manages to pack in so much to admire, with the attention to detail in creating small cameos an essential element adding so much extra to the finished model.

All photos in this feature by Phil Parker



Dennis Allenden on modelling French railways; and particular layouts that I've seen at shows and featured in the modelling press such as Christopher Payne's 'St Pierre et la Rue Perrin', Jacky Molinaro's 'Vis-en'Artois', Bruno and Alain Duchesne's 'Souvenir de Royan' and 'Isle de Fa' layouts and Peter and John Smith's 'St-Jean sur Mer',

Following the holiday in 2007 Charles started reading the French narrow gauge magazine *Voie Libre* "and never really looked back..."

The metre-gauge CFBS was a key inspiration – the station building for St-Etienne Ville is based on that at Le Crotoy and the harbour-side scene of St-Etienne Quai follows the theme of that at St Valey-sur-Somme, though Charles adds it is very compressed. But he decided that his layout would represent a 60cm gauge line, in 009/H0e scale, as he is a life-long modeller in 009.

The layout is built on baseboards constructed on a frame of 15 x 45mm timber unusually topped with 8mm balsa sheet; "It's so light and easy to work," Charles says.

The track is Peco 009 Streamline, but to create the bespoke look of the tramway-style route along the quayside and through the street Charles hand-laid code 55 rail on copper-clad sleepers.

There are two stations, St-Etienne Ville and St-Etienne Quai, and each board is independently controlled, the layout effectively run as two separate entities.

Buildings are a mixture, most of them scratchbuilt along with some kits by MKD and a couple of farmhouse kits that are marketed as props for wargamers in 1:76 scale.

Long marine life

Particularly impressive are the boats tied up at the quay – though sharp-eyed readers might notice that one of them, a coaster, has a very Welsh name... The 'Rachel Parry' of Portmadoc (old spelling). was originally built for a Welsh 009 layout



Charles had in the 1990s. He comments; "She about 25 years old, and is now reduced to timber traffic between the south-west and Normandy!"

Just as impressive, however, are the small details – this is a layout teeming with tiny cameos that really provide the atmosphere of a French harbour town. »

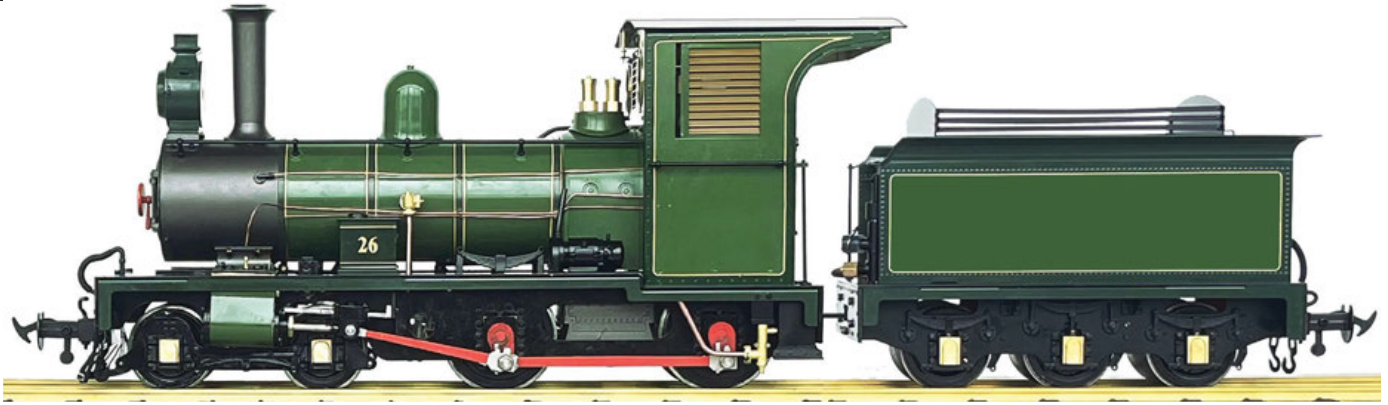




As for the rolling stock, this is a mixture of kitbuilt, kitbashed and scratchbuilt items – Charles tells us that models of French prototypes are rather thin on the ground...

He adds that the Bristol show seems to have heralded the second coming of the layout – it has since been to a four-day show as part of the 50th anniversary gala of the CF Froissy-Dompierre/P'tit Train de Haute Somme, (an enormous amount of fun, but tiring, according to Charles) and it may possibly be appearing at several more major UK exhibitions in the coming months. So **NGW** readers should have plenty of opportunity to view St. Etienne-en-Caux for themselves – take it from us, it's well worth a look... **NGW**





■ It's very much a large-scale selection of new modelling product on the shelf this month, thanks to new stuff appearing at the recent Llangollen Garden Rail Show, and with the National Garden Railway Show happening at Peterborough on 25th June there could be some more delights for those of a garden railway persuasion in our next issue. But come on smaller-scale narrow gauge manufacturers, let's see your new releases!

Topping this month's selection is the first 'sneak peek' of Accucraft UK's forthcoming 'Lawley' 4-4-0 live-steam locomotive in 16mm scale. The full-size locos ran on the Beira Railway in Mozambique – 42 were ordered from the Falcon Engine & Car Works in England (previously Hughes, builder of Corris Railway no 3) and Glasgow Railway Engineering in Scotland between 1895 and 1898. After the Beira Railway converted to 'Cape Gauge' (3ft 6in) several of the Lawleys were later purchased by South African Railways, eventually becoming class NG6. Two are today preserved at the Sandstone Steam Trust.

Accucraft's model is described as 'museum quality' – it is gauge-adjustable between 32mm and 45mm and gas-fired, the mechanical specification to the builder's long-established standards. It will be available in either Beira green, SAR green or SAR black, at an anticipated price of £2995.00. Certainly it will present a different shape on 16mm lines – full details are on the website at www.accucraft.uk.com and Accucraft adds that the loco will look particularly appropriate with the range of SAR passenger and freight laser-cut rolling stock kits produced in MDF or plywood by Resurgam Rolling Stock (<http://resurgamrollingstock.co.uk>).



Penrhyn open season at Wood Valley

The spartan open carriages built by the Penrhyn Quarries in north Wales for transporting their workers have long been popular kits in 16mm scale, produced in the past by the likes of Brandbright, I P Engineering and Timpdon. Now there is a new kit available from Wood Valley Works.

The original vehicles were constructed between 1879 and 1927 and unusually not numbered but lettered – the first batch (A-J) came from De Winton of Caernarfon and seven more (K-Q) were built at the quarry workshops in Felin Fawr.

There was no effort made to provide much comfort – in original form the carriages were unsprung and having ridden in a recreation at the Bala Lake Railway your editor can confirm that the ride is, memorable... Several survived into preservation and the Tallylyn Railway constructed their first preservation carriages from them, initially simply fitting basic roofs, so there are lots of possibilities for the enterprising modeller...

The kit is in MDF and comes complete with wheels, axles, brass bearings and a range of 3D-printed detailing parts such as buffers, coupling hooks and safety chains. The brake gear works, and at the price this is an inexpensive way to assemble a rake of rolling stock.

The Wood Valley Works website is also well worth a look for interesting 16mm items, even offering a kit of the novel brake van converted from Penrhyn loco 'Sanford'!

Produced by Wood Valley Works

Tel: 01270 876882 E-mail: sales@woodvalleyworks.co.uk

Web: www.woodvalleyworks.co.uk Price: £32.00 each plus post

Early Darj from Plateway

There are plenty of options these days when assembling a Darjeeling Himalayan Railway train in 16mm scale but these two new releases from Plateway Models are a bit different to the norm, being of the Indian line's first-generation bogie carriages built between 1906 and 1915.

The unusual aspects to these vehicles were their heavily rounded corners, which will no doubt turn heads in a model setting. They also have central floors at a lower level than at the ends.

There are three types available, a first/second-class open composite, second/third composite and guard/luggage/open. All are supplied as comprehensive kits – the bodies are laser-cut ply with different layers to create the relief between doors, windows and panels, with such details as internal seating all supplied, as are the bogies and wheels. All that is needed to complete each model are paint, glue and decals.

Produced by Plateway Models

E-mail: PlatewayModels@gmail.com

Web: www.platewaymodels.co.uk

Price: £100.00 each plus post





Hopper effort in 7/8ths

Model Engineers Laser is best known for supplying laser-cut metal components to larger-scale model engineering users but among smaller items also produces parts in 7/8ths scale (18-inch gauge on 32mm, 2ft gauge on 45mm track) for the Hunslet 0-4-0 'Jack'. The firm is also working on a design for the Kerr Stuart Skylark 0-4-2T (one of the editor's favourite locos – and he models in 7/8ths...).

That probably inspired the latest item for 7/8ths, based on a design by noted modeller John Campbell. These hopper wagons were used by the Snailbeach District Railways in Shropshire, where they were hauled by Baldwins – and a Kerr Stuart Skylark.

As the company name suggests the finely detailed kit is modelled in laser-cut plywood and brass, and is designed to suit Model Earth Design Glyn Valley Tramway axleboxes and wheels from Slaters.

MEL planned to launch the wagon at the National Garden Railway Show in Peterborough on 25th June.

Produced by Model Engineers Laser

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Memories of the Bord na Mona Railways

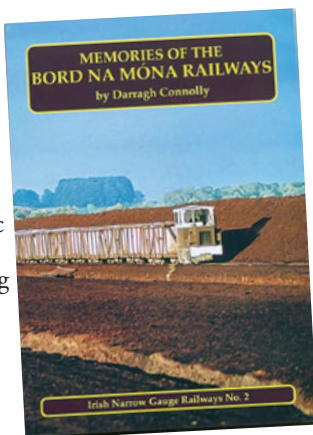
Darragh Connelly

■ Darragh Connelly is a well known figure on the Irish narrow gauge scene and has now joined forces with prolific publisher Mainline & Maritime to produce this book. It marks the passing of what many consider the last remaining industrial narrow gauge empire, the extensive and constantly changing 3ft gauge lines serving the Irish peat bogs of Bord na Mona.

The informative A4 softback, running to 64 pages, provides a great deal of detail on what was a massive operation, mostly through good quality colour photos used nice and large, typically over half a page and combined with highly detailed captions.

No detail is missed, from the train formations out on the bogs, to the yards and workshops, the locomotives (the various diesel classes are all carefully analysed), rolling stock (again, individual items pictured) and even the arrangements made when passengers were carried, involving some midly odd conversions from buses... Modellers will particularly find the close-up views of the locos inspiring for future projects.

With the Bord na Mona operation rapidly disappearing after many years of warning, this is a highly topical publication that provides a fitting tribute to what was a fascinating industrial system, the like of which we will never see again. **AC**



The Railways and Tramways of Laxey

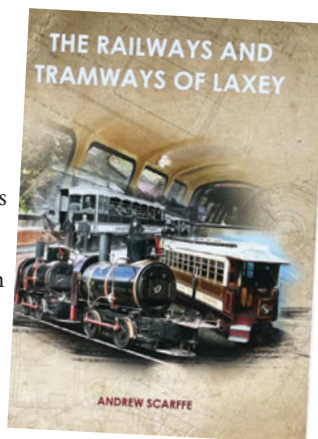
Andrew Scarfe

■ This is not a new book, published originally in 2014, but the publishers have now supplied the author with extra stock allowing the book to go on sale at what is an absolute bargain price, as well as helping one of the Isle of Man's most unusual lines.

In this A4 hardback, running to 175 pages, author Andrew Scarfe provides us with a very detailed description of how the rich lead mine close to the village of Laxey was exploited in the late 19th century. In one year the Great Laxey Mine produced more than 11,000 tons of zinc ore, more than every other UK lead mine combined, and to transport it a 19-inch gauge railway was built and worked by two distinctive and tiny locomotives built by Stephen Lewin and named 'Ant' and 'Bee'.

Obviously the Great Laxey Mine line takes centre stage in the book, which describes not only the original history but the restoration of the line to today's heritage attraction, including the building of replicas of the two locos. But every other tramway in the district is also analysed in detail, even schemes that came to nothing, and the connecting Manx Electric and Snaefell Mountain tramways.

There are many photos including a host of period views, maps of lines and track layouts, drawings of the locos – this would be a good book at its original price, at £5 it's an absolute steal... **AC**



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First French in China

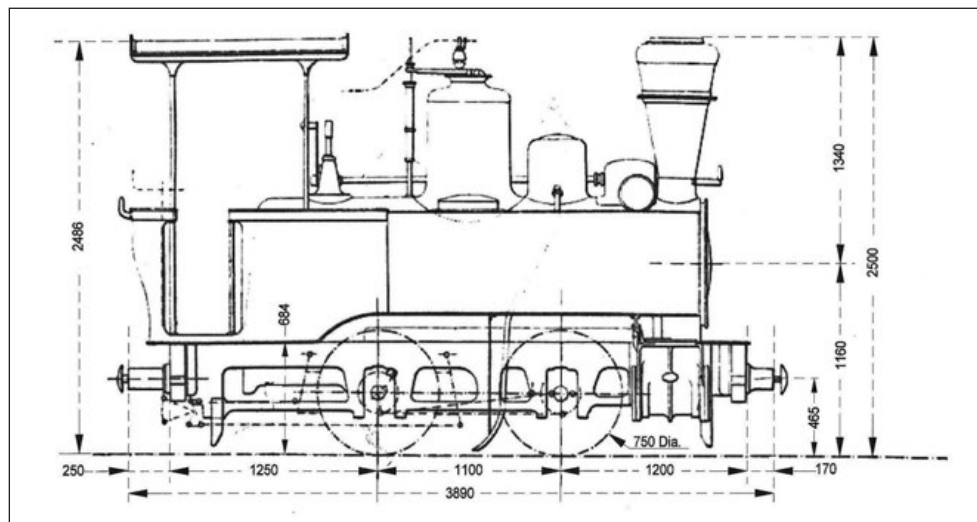
I was delighted to see the article by Dick Paterson titled *First French Railway in China* in *NGW* 165. This article is nicely illustrated and gives a good basic description of efforts to introduce railways to China.

I am afraid that the final part of the article with regards to Jardine's relationship with Decauville is not supported by hard evidence. I spent considerable time in the Cambridge University library studying the Jardine records and could find no evidence that the company bought the Decauville railway.

The Tien-Tsing Decauville Railway is described in considerable detail in English-language Chinese newspapers. I was lucky to find these six or seven years ago. These tell us that the Decauville railway was offered to the Chinese for installation at the Imperial Palace in Beijing but the price was too high and a French entrepreneur, a Monsieur Thévenet offered a suitable railway at a much lower price. The newspapers report that the Decauville track (and rolling stock?) went to Tien-tsing town and was afterwards sold on.

There is some evidence that the locomotive was returned to France. This locomotive was built by Couillet in 1884 and given the Decauville number 26 and name 'Fedora'. It was eventually sold to Soc. des Mines de Bormettes in 1889. This indicates that it was the property of Decauville from 1884 to 1889.

The railway offered by Mr Thévenet is described in *La Genie Civil*, 15th September 1888. Peter Crush has been researching Chinese Railways for many years and was the source of this article. **Jeff Lanham**



The diagram above is from *La Genie Civil* in September 1888, as mentioned in Jeff Lanham's letter and has been cleaned up by Dick Paterson. It shows an 800mm gauge loco supplied for a railway in the Chinese Imperial Palace Gardens.

The feature in *NGW* 166 on the Bicton Woodland Railway reminded Michael Farr, a regular *NGW* correspondent, of the time he tried the cab of the loco 'Woolwich' for size (below) – see his letter.

Dick Paterson replies: I am grateful for the response from Jeff Lanham to my article. The additional information is most welcome. His bone of contention seems to be that Jardine did not buy the Decauville equipment for the demonstration railway at Tien-Tsing. If Jardine did not pay for it, who did?

According to Maggie Keswick, (a descendant of Jardine Matheson's co-founder William Jardine) in *The Thistle and the Jade...*, Gaston Galy, Decauville's representative for China, had signed an agreement with Jardine Matheson to co-operate in an attempt to sell miniature railway equipment to the Chinese Government. Was Jardine canny enough to persuade Decauville to supply the railway at its own risk and expense against the hope that it would lead to substantial business in China?

The significance of the article in *Le Genie Civil* is that there were two 'Toy' trains in China in the late 1880s: the 600mm gauge demonstration train depicted in my article and an 800mm gauge train in the Imperial Palace Gardens.

This was supplied through Mr. Thevenet with a 0-4-0 locomotive by J. F. Cail of Chaillot, Paris and five luxurious bogie carriages 11 metres long by 2.2 metres wide built in Lyon. These are the carriages pulled by eunuchs in the Palace Gardens because the Empress did not like the sound of the steam train. Health and Safety at Work?

This is an interesting field, but the more we dig, the more loose ends we will find.

Andrew C adds: All fascinating stuff – as Dick says in his covering letter his objective has always been to lay out what we think we know and what is missing, and to hope that it prompts someone to offer the missing bit of the jigsaw, or correct a misunderstanding, as did Jeff.

Bicton memories

Thank you for publishing my letter on the Bala line and photos in *NGW* 167. It is inevitable when one has been interested in railways for 80 years that you read through a magazine and think; "I was there!" On page 18 I found another short but favourite line – Bicton Gardens.

In my early BBC days Bicton fell in the South and West area so I followed up the news of the opening and soon made friends with Mr James, the agent; I was subsequently invited to special events, such as the opening of the branch line to the Hermitage to record interviews.

When our two boys arrived Bicton became a favoured family outing and before long I built (notionally for them) a small portable layout of the terminus, from measurements taken on site. I always thought the balloon-shaped track layout was ideal for a larger model railway.

I used 3/8in scale on 00 gauge, Triang/Hornby wagon underframes and bogies for the rolling stock and Triang Transcontinental diesel power bogies for 'Carnegie', the bogie diesel, and also as the complete power unit for the small four-wheeled diesels. The steam loco 'Woolwich' was cobbled together from a Triang Polly and a lot of Plastikard!

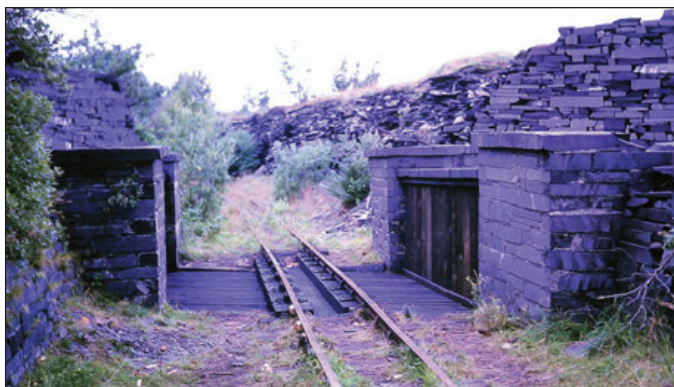
When we moved to Hampshire I gave the layout to the Bicton Gardens Museum, but not the beautiful hand-built model of Woolwich made for me by Dennis Martin of Bedford, who had seen the loco at the Arsenal. I still have this and can't bring myself to paint it blue for fear of spoiling it.

I took the model to Bicton and arranged a photo-shoot with the local paper as the loco's regular driver at that time was also called Dennis Martin! The press photographer, Freddie Collins, also took the attached photo of me in charge – the Lord help the passengers!

Michael Farr



From a different age...



Could Penrhyn have been preserved?

The letter in *NGW* 165 from Alisdair McNichol, disagreeing with a historical report published in the previous issue on the state of the Penrhyn Railway after closure, prompted Robin Willis, membership secretary of the Penrhyn Quarry Railway Society (www.penrhynqrs.co.uk), to get in touch with more information.

According to Alisdair the report reprinted in *NGW* 164 from the Narrow Gauge Railway Society's *Narrow Gauge News* of March 1962, in which the Penrhyn main line was described as being in "very poor shape indeed", was wrong – he made a survey of the line in Spring 1964 and described it as "a little overgrown in places but mostly very solid."

Robin has now provided us with a copy of a survey that was undertaken by the Merseyside Model Railway Society in April of the same year, and printed in 2009 in the PQRS's excellent quarterly and mainly historical journal *Y Llechen–The Slate*.

The Merseyside members were prompted into action by a letter in the *Railway Magazine* from the University College of Bangor Railway Society, enquiring after the prospects for preserving the Penrhyn.

They started their survey at Port Penrhyn and worked their way along the entire line to Felin Fawr works and into the quarry. They carried 'tick sheets' with space for comments, examined every over and under-bridge, and measured the gauge of the track at 11 different sites. They also considered heritage railway requirements, such as a station at each end, car parking and storage for locos and rolling stock.

The result was an extensive report which space allows us only to provide a flavour of here. It was duly submitted to the Bangor Society and nothing more was heard of it! No-one involved knew at the time that the quarry owners were negotiating to sell all its assets to building giant McAlpine's, which a preservation effort would not have aided.

The report covered permanent way, rolling stock and facilities. The track was said to average 1ft 11-inch gauge but varying from 1ft 10 $\frac{1}{8}$ to 1ft 11 $\frac{1}{16}$. Sleepers

were "good on mainline, okay at Quarry, poor at Port Penrhyn." Most of the mainline fishplates were present, though around 1 in 20 were missing at the Port and 50 per cent at the quarry.

Some good, some not

The alignment was said to be good on the main line but poor at the Port, while the quarry was described as "shocking"... One stretch of track near Felin Hen had been slightly buckled by a fire.

Only "three or four" stub points were working – the others required "digging out and oiling." Several "normal" points were found, "all in good condition."

The ballast was described as "old dirt but well drained," except in one cutting. Track was overgrown on the quay, only slightly on the main line and clear at the quarry.

The surveyors concluded that the bridges were mostly in good condition, only one having a not-too serious crack in the bricks. Fencing was in good condition too.

In terms of facilities, the Port had a two-road steam shed (still there today), a carriage shed and another shed that could be turned into a repair shop, while the loading bank could be used as a platform and another building as a booking office. There was plenty of car parking space too, though it was concluded passenger access at the quarry end was poor.

The team even surveyed all the machine

tools they found, analysing whether they could be re-used in a preserved operation. Only one was dubbed "useless".

The full survey certainly makes for interesting reading. "The reader may form the opinion that the railway had been neglected but could easily have been repaired to become an iconic preserved railway," Robin comments. Indeed – what might have been... **NGW**



These photos from July 1963, a year after the Penrhyn line closed were all provided from the PQRS archive.

At top left is St Anne's Bridge at Felin Fawr and top right the track and bridge at Felin Hen – the scene has vastly changed in these areas over the years with the bridges having long gone.

Above right is one of the points at a 'pass-bye' (passing loop), and at right the quarry workshops at Felin Fawr – the end of the infamous 'scrap line' is just visible.



That was the year that...

Narrow gauge news stories from the archives and their legacy...

From 20 years ago

Corris Railway Corris, Gwynedd (2ft 3in gauge)

On 3rd June 2002 the Corris Railway ran its first public train for 72 years, comprising Ruston & Hornsby 4wDM no 6, a single coach for 16 passengers, and a brake van. The train operates an hourly service between Corris station and the shed at Maespoeth, where a short talk on the history of the line is given. (NGN, July 2002)

East Hayling Light Railway Hayling Island, Hampshire (2ft gauge)

After an unexpected delay, tracklaying has now commenced. By the end of May, most of the track and pointwork in Beachlands station had been laid, but not ballasted. Once it is completed and the rolling stock can be shunted in the yard, work on the mainline to Eastoke will begin. (NGN, July 2002)

Lynton & Barnstaple Railway Woody Bay Stn, North Devon (60cm gauge)

The railway's board has announced that tracklaying will commence at Woody Bay in August, once the supply of new sleepers, rail fixings and some brand-new rail has been delivered.

Public operations will commence on 18th April 2003, when visitors will be able to ride down the line on a specially constructed works train, as far as bridge 67 (currently under construction).

(NGN, July 2002)



Definitely an encouraging issue of Narrow Gauge News! All three lines soon progressed and tracklaying at The L&B actually started that June as in the picture at right, featured in NGW130 – the young Murray Dodds to the rear now manages the Fairbourne Railway. The three lines are now long-established and while the East Hayling line makes few headlines the Corris and Lynton & Barnstaple are both moving towards future major expansion, though both yet to extend much beyond the length of lines described in 2002.

Welshpool & Llanfair Light Rly Llanfair Caereinion, Powys (2ft 6in gauge)

The railway celebrated the centenary of 'cutting the first sod' on Saturday 4th May... the Earl of Powis re-enacted the Cutting of the First Sod on the lawn outside the Raven Square terminus in company with chairman Ken Fenton, and with music provided by members of the Newtown Silver Band. The last time this band had played at the railway was when the last train under British Railways ran in 1956. Amazingly, several members of the band were present on both occasions! (NGN, July 2002)



Your editor remembers this event very well! Inspired by the suitably period outfits worn by those performing the first sod recreation, when the centenary celebrations a year later included an 'Edwardian Weekend' I persuaded my entire family to dress accordingly (right). I don't think my three children have ever quite forgiven me...

Extracts from **Narrow Gauge News**, the news journal of the Narrow Gauge Railway Society – for more details of the Society and how to join up, go to www.ngrs.org.uk or see the advert on page 45.



Diary & Special Events

■ No responsibility can be accepted for dates on these pages and anyone planning a visit for a ride or to an event should check the line's website and/or social media feeds for the latest update before travelling. Not all trains operate over full lines – on some days for example the Ffestiniog Railway only runs from Porthmadog to Tan-y-Blwch.

Special Events in June

Only events of interest to rail enthusiasts are included in this guide.

■ **Wed to Sun in July, Devon Railway Centre Open Day** Museum nr Tiverton, 2ft gauge line. <http://devonrailwaycentre.co.uk>

■ **Every Saturday, Great Laxey Mines Railway operating;** novel 19-inch steam line on Isle of Man. www.laxeyminesrailway.im

■ **2nd July, West Lancashire Light Railway Volunteers Day;** Behind the scenes tours aimed at potential new recruits

■ **2nd July, Amberley Museum Steam Show;** Bagnall 'Polar Bear' steam loco on railway, road steam operating around site

■ **9th-10th July, Evesham Vale Light Railway Gala;** Visiting steam locos from Cleethorpes and Rhiw Valley, intensive service

■ **9th-10th July, Leek & Rudyard Railway Isle of Mull Gala;** Recalling Mull & West Highland Railway using line's original stock.

■ **16th July, Romney Hythe & Dymchurch Railway 95th Anniversary Special;** Train celebrating reopening on 16th July 1927

■ **16th-17th July, Cleethorpes Coast Lt Railway Summer Steam;** All locos in operation, visiting locos, miniatures and models

■ **24th July, Gartell Light Railway Open Day;** 2ft Somerset line, frequent timetable. 01963 370752, <http://newglr.weebly.com>

■ **27th-31st July, Isle of Man Railways Summer Transport Festival;** all steam and electric lines, details at www.rail.im

■ **27th, 30th-31st July, Groudle Glen Railway;** for Isle of Man Heritage Transport Festival, all-day Wed, Victorian Sat, Gala Sun

■ **30th-31st July, Welsh Highland Rly Centenary Celebration;** Heritage trains between Dinas and Rhyd Ddu

■ **7th Aug, Rhiw Valley Light Railway Open Weekend.** 15in gauge line close to Welshpool & Llanfair. www.rvlr.co.uk

Tramways

- **Douglas Horse Tramway** www.iombusandrail.im/heritage/ No reopening date announced at press time
- **Great Orme Tramway:** Conwy 01492 577877, www.greatormetramway.co.uk Open daily between 10am and 6pm
- **Manx Electric Railway, Snaefell Mountain Railway:** Isle of Man, 01624 662525, www.iombusandrail.im/heritage/ Daily services, Summer Transport Festival 27-31 July
- **Seaton Tramway:** Devon 01297 20375, www.tram.co.uk Daily services from 10am

Miniature Railways

- **Audley End Railway** (10.25in): Essex 01799 541354, www.audley-end-railway.co.uk Daily services
- **Beer Heights Light Railway** (7.25in): Devon 01297 21542, www.pecorama.co.uk Daily services.
- **Lappa Valley Railway** (15, 10.25, 7.25in): Cornwall 01872 510317, www.lappavalley.co.uk Open daily.
- **Littlehampton Miniature Railway** (12.25in): Sussex www.littlehamptonminiaturerailway.com Weekends and 26th-31st
- **Moors Valley Railway** (7.25in): Hants 01425 471415, www.moorsvalleyrailway.co.uk Daily services
- **North Bay Railway, Scarborough** (20in): Yorks 01723 368791, www.nbr.org.uk, Daily services
- **Rhyl Miniature Railway** (15in): Clwyd 01352 759109, www.rhylminiaturerailway.co.uk Friday-Sunday, daily from 15th
- **South Downs Light Railway** (10.25in): Sussex 07518 753784, www.south-downs-railway.com Weekends, 27th

Visit our forum: <http://www.narrow-gauge-forum.co.uk>

What's On	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th	12th	13th	14th	15th	16th	17th	18th	19th	20th	21st	22nd	23rd	24th	25th	26th	27th	28th	29th	30th	31st
Almond Valley Rly: 01506 414957 www.almondvalley.co.uk																															
Amberley Museum: 01798 831370 www.amberleymuseum.co.uk																															
Amerton Railway: 01785 850965 www.amertonrailway.co.uk																															
Apedale Valley Rly: 0845 094 1953 www.avlr.org.uk																															
Bala Lake Railway: 01678 540666 www.bala-lake-railway.co.uk																															
Brecon Mountain Rly: 01685 722988 www.bmr.wales																															
Bressingham: 01379 686900 www.bressingham.co.uk																															
Bure Valley Railway: 01263 733858 www.bvrw.co.uk																															
Cleethorpes Coast Light Railway 01472 604657 www.cclr.co.uk																															
Corris Railway: 01654 761303, www.corris.co.uk																															
Evesham Vale Light Rly: 01386 422282 www.evlr.co.uk																															
Exbury Gardens Railway: 023 80891203 www.exbury.co.uk																															
Fairbourne Railway: 01341 250362 www.fairbournerrailway.com																															
Ffestiniog Railway: 01766 516000 www.festrail.co.uk																															
Golden Valley Light Railway: 01773 747674 www.gvlr.org.uk/																															
Great Whipsnade Rly: 0844 225 1826 www.zsl.org/zsl-whipsnade-zoo																															
Groulle Glen Railway: 01624 670453 www.ggr.org.uk						Eve						Eve								Eve											
Hampton Kempn Rly: 07583 560167 www.hamptonkemptonrailway.org.uk																															
Hayling Light Railway: 07902 446340 haylinglightrailway.wixsite.com/ehlr																															
Heatherslaw Light Rly: 01890 820317 www.heatherslawlightrailway.co.uk																															
Isle of Man Steam Rly: 01624 663366 www.iombusandrail.im/heritage/																															
Kirklees Light Rly: 01484 865727 www.whistlestopvalley.co.uk																															
Launceston Stm Rly: 01566 775 665 www.launcestonr.co.uk																															
Leadhills & Wanlockhead Railway www.leadhillsrailway.co.uk																															
Leek & Rudyard Railway: 01538 306704 www.rlsr.org																															
Leighton Buzzard Railway 01525 373888 www.buzzrail.uk																															
Llanberis Lake Rly: 01286 870549 www.lake-railway.co.uk																															
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Sittingbourne & Kemsley Railway: 01795 424899, www.sklr.net																															
Snowdon Mountain Rly: 0870 450 0033 www.snowdonrailway.co.uk		Service to Clogwyn only – see website																													
South Tynedale Rly: 01434 381696 www.south-tyndedale-railway.org.uk																															
Steeple Grange Light Railway: 01629 55123 www.sgrr.co.uk																															
Talylyn Railway: 01654 710472 www.talylyn.co.uk																															
Teifi Valley Railway: 01559 371077 www.teifivalleyrailway.wales																															
Threlkeld Msm: 01768 779747, www. threlkeldquarryandminingmuseum.co.uk																															
Vale of Rheidol Rly: 01970 625819 www.rheidolrailway.co.uk																															
Waterworks Railway: 020 8568 4757 www.waterandsteam.org.uk																															
Wells Walsingham Rly: 01328 711630 www.wwlr.co.uk																															
Welsh Highland Railway 01766 516000, www.festrail.co.uk																															
Welsh Highland Heritage Railway 01766 513402, www.whr.co.uk																															
Welshpool & Llanfair Light Railway 01938 810441, www.wllr.org.uk																															
West Lancashire Light Railway 01772 815881, www.westlancs.org																															
KEY Trains (steam or diesel), Special events, No trains	01	02	03	04	05	06	07	08	09	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Steaming to a Hungarian Spa



Donald Brooks recalls a 1994 trip over a Hungarian line that has recently reopened.

While the Covid-19 years of 2020/21 provided a consistent diet of bad news for rail enthusiasts, with passengers draining away from the main-line networks and heritage lines forced to adjust to completely new systems of working, there was the occasional good news story.

One of Europe's major railways, MÁV (Magyar Államvasutak or Hungarian State Railways), provided an example on 1st July 2021 when it reopened a narrow gauge branch closed in 2002. The line in question, to Csisztaföld on the Balatonfenyves system, exudes real narrow gauge charm, with short trains trundling through the flat rural landscape, albeit on newly relaid track.

The Balatonfenyvesi Gazdasági Vasút was one of several light railways designed to open up underdeveloped areas for agriculture after the Second World War. Construction of the 760mm gauge network on the

southern shore of Lake Balaton started in 1950 and continued for most of the decade, ultimately extending to roughly 50km. The first five kilometres south from the lakeside standard gauge interchange at Balatonfenyves to Imremajor were built on the route of an earlier 600mm gauge horse-worked line.

Motive power was provided by C50 four-wheel diesel tractors, built by Északi in Budapest from the 1950s. The first closures came as early as 1968, but some routes survived because of the poor state of the local roads, leaving a system of three branches for me to encounter when I first visited in 1994.

The main route, which has continued to see passenger trains throughout apart from a short break for reconstruction, runs for 14km in a mainly southerly direction to Somogyszénpál. Branching off eastwards at Imremajor another route

Above: The end of the line. C50 5713 runs round at Csiszta gyógyfürdő. In the background is 490.056, which spent some hours here with the nostalgia train.

Below: 490.056 approaches Balatonfenyves near the end of its journey with the return nostalgia service from Csiszta. This ran daily in July and August, with a special fare, and otherwise only when chartered.

Photos by Donald Brooks, summer 1994

continued to a further junction with lines running south to Táska and east to Csiszta gyógyfürdő, both 15kms from Balatonfenyves. The Csiszta branch was extended for one kilometre as late as 1987 to serve the thermal baths referred to in the second element of the station name.

Steam specials

The Táska branch was very much a poor relation with just a couple of daily services negotiating its overgrown tracks, while Csiszta saw extra summer services for tourists from the lake, including steam specials. These were worked by 0-8-0T 490.056, Budapest 5848 of 1950, with a train of special stock.

I travelled on the 12.00 diesel service from Balatonfenyves, which provided a return trip along the Táska branch on its way to Csiszta. During my five minutes at Csiszta, before the train returned directly to the lake, there was just time to photograph 490.056 during its own protracted layover. Back at Balatonfenyves well before the steam train returned, I walked out to capture a further photo as it approached.

A serious derailment in 2001 led to discussions about the network's future, ultimately bringing about closure in September 2002 apart from the short section to Imremajor. Following rebuilding, passenger traffic was quickly restored to Somogyszénpál, but 19 years elapsed before Csiszta saw trains again. Larger Mk48 diesels are now regular performers on the improved track while steam is also expected to make a comeback. **NGW**





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